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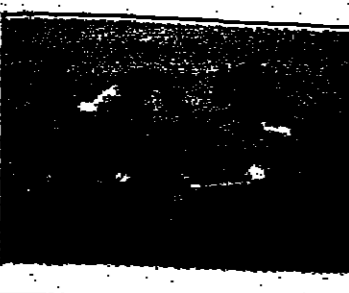
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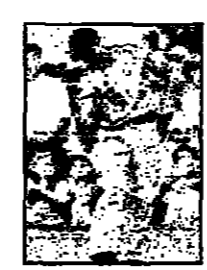
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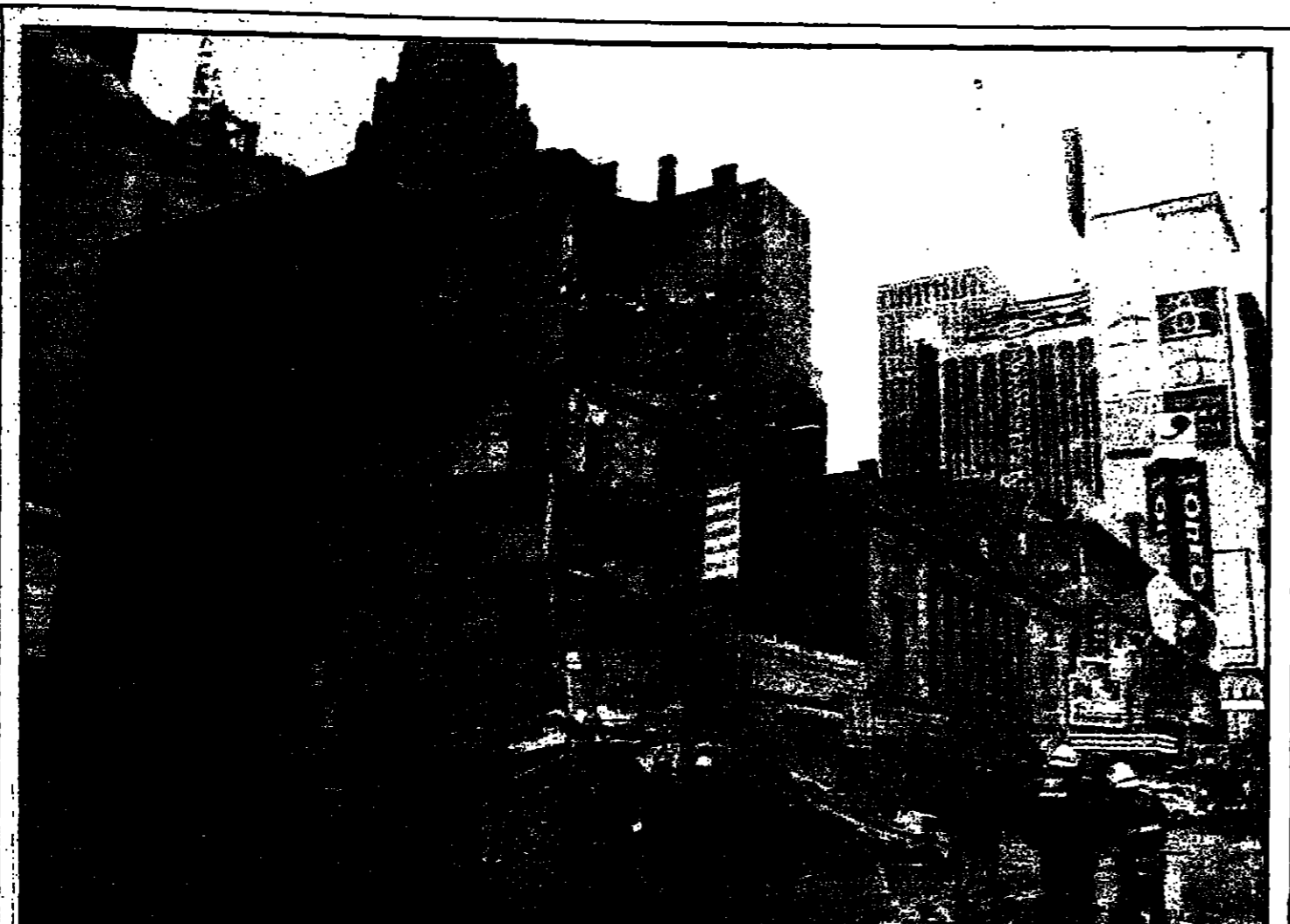
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**Times Square collapse**  
Less than 48 hours before the streets around Times Square would be packed with New Year's celebrants, a six-story building on 42nd Street partially collapsed yesterday, sending concrete chunks raining down onto the sidewalk. No one was injured in the pre-dawn accident. The building, which was unoccupied and slated for demolition, held balloons for the traditional celebration, which draws hundreds of thousands of people. The miraculous avoidance of injury or death in a building collapse in the heart of New York will provide additional cause for celebration this year. Full story, Page 7. (AP)

## Gov't pushes for budget vote tonight

By DAVID HARRIS

The government is hoping for a final Knesset vote on the 1998 state budget and its arrangement bill late tonight, after Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu secured a coalition majority yesterday.

The government gained the support of a variety of coalition members, including those from Yisrael Ba'aliya and Moledet. While United Torah Judaism MKs Meir Porush and Shmuel Halpert said last night they are still not voting with the coalition, Geshet was expected to come around.

"We are very close to an agreement. It's just an issue of one word here and one word there," Geshet MK Michael Kleiner said. "It's impossible to ignore the fact that others also haven't received everything."

Netanyahu spent some 24 hours since Monday persuading coalition parties to vote with the government in return for budgetary concessions. The longest talks

were held with Yisrael Ba'aliya, which last night was still demanding written confirmation for a variety of promises from Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman.

Key to receiving the party's seven votes was Netanyahu's reported agreement to establish a ministerial committee to examine how to update government mortgage aid.

The NRP received most of what

that the government will keep to its word and is not demanding written documentation, said Hendel.

"There is no document, there will be no document, just the fact that all of Israel will benefit," he said.

Moledet's support came at the relatively low price of some NIS 50 million, but party leader Rehavam Ze'evi said money was not the main issue at stake.

"At the end of the day there's a country, and those that care about the country couldn't allow the situation to further deteriorate," said Ze'evi.

As of last night only United Torah Judaism and Geshet had yet to fall into line with the coalition. The baredi party is calling for additional funding for its constituency, while Geshet is demanding that an agreement reached last summer between Foreign Minister David Levy and Netanyahu be upheld.

"We won't be part of a government that harms the same people that voted it into power," Geshet MK Maxim Levy said last night.

**Public hospitals continue strike today, Page 2**

it had demanded, particularly in the sphere of education.

"We didn't receive anything," said MK Zvi Hendel. "The people of Israel did."

The agreements were mainly reached with Neeman and his senior civil servants, with Netanyahu involved in some of the work. The NRP is satisfied

## Susskin convicted of putting up pig flyer in Hebron

Sentencing due today

By ELLI WOHLEBENTER and news agencies

Tatiana Susskin faces up to 26 years in prison at her sentencing today, following her conviction yesterday for putting up posters in Hebron depicting Mohammed as a pig.

The 26-year-old Susskin wept as the verdict was read in Jerusalem District Court. She told reporters afterward that "I have no regrets for what I have done."

She was convicted of committing a racist act, supporting a terrorist organization, attempting to give religious offense and attempted vandalism.

She also was convicted of endangering life for throwing rocks at Arab drivers.

In announcing the verdict, Judge Zvi Segal said that freedom of expression did not give Susskin the right to do what she did.

"The accused does not have and never had the right to enter parts of Hebron populated only by Moslems and to paste up these posters," he said in court.

Reacting to the verdict, Susskin said, "I don't agree with what he decided. It's a shame to see that all the heavies [charged with criminal offenses] get out, but small people like me don't."

During her trial, Susskin, a supporter of the outlawed Kach movement, said she suffered from "confusion and disturbances" and was treated in psychiatric hospitals in her native Russia. She made aliyah six years ago, but said she returned twice to Russia because of emotional problems.

Her lawyer, Shmuel Casper,

said he was "hopeful that she'll get no more than one year," as she "didn't go there to incite World War III."

Casper said his client's right to freedom of expression had been curbed.

"It's time this country set out a bill of rights... so people will know whether a picture they draw or a postcard they send is a racist act," he said.

Susskin faces up to 20 years on



Tatiana Susskin (Briana Hendler)

the charge of endangering human life on the road and one to three years on the other charges.

The flyer incident occurred on June 27, when Susskin entered the Palestinian Authority-controlled territory with a number of leaflets showing a pig labeled "Mohammed" writing the Koran.

She then posted them on some 20 houses. Because it was close to Shabbat, it was decided not to arrest her but to wait until after Shabbat.

But the next afternoon, after Susskin threw a stone at a passing car and damaged it, she was arrested.

The pig posters triggered outrage throughout the Moslem world, including angry street protests in Bangladesh and Iran, and rulings by Moslem clerics that insulting the prophet was punishable by death.

Israeli leaders condemned Susskin's actions and apologized to Moslems.

## How much does the coalition vote cost?

### BUDGET '98

By DAVID HARRIS

No one was prepared to say exactly how much the coalition budget vote would cost the country nor where the additional funds would be found. However, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday was seen smiling for the first time in the plenum since the budget debate began last week.

Yisrael Ba'aliya said it is satisfied with the following promises made by Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman:

- Those on income support will receive additional help, after a number of years with no update in payments. Knesset sources suggested a 25 percent update, the equivalent of NIS 50 million.
- Mortgages for the disadvantaged will be updated in line with the decision of a committee headed by Netanyahu that is to include Foreign Minister David Levy, Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky, and Immigration and Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein. The committee will decide how to spend the NIS 600m. put aside for this purpose. Knesset sources said last night that Neeman has let it be known the reserves could be stretched to NIS 900m., with the overall update reaching NIS 1 billion - the remaining NIS 100m. to be found from alternative sources.
- By the end of February, there will be a further committee decision on provision of land for rent for non-profit organizations and hostels.
- Special university programs will receive NIS 25m., which is already accounted for by the Treasury, according to Knesset sources.
- There will be capital transfers from the Construction and Housing and Industry and

Trade ministries to fund immigration and education, according to Knesset sources.

- A further NIS 50m. will be made available to new immigrants who were swindled in transit to Israel.
- NRP MK Zvi Hendel said yesterday that the party has received all that it demanded from the Treasury.
- All the school hours cut in the last two years - some 30,000 - will be reinstated, with an additional 10,000 hours, at a cost of NIS 160m.
- As of January 1, long school days will commence in 100 localities. This agreement is valued at NIS 50m.
- There will be a substantial reduction in fees for those attending hesder yeshivot, who now pay NIS 8,000 per annum for board and lodging.
- Twenty groups of young people will receive additional government aid to allow them to help regenerate development towns and other areas of the country.
- Three road-construction programs will be carried out in Judea and Samaria. One road will link Gush Etzion with Kiryat Arba, bypassing El Arub; another will circle Bethlehem eastwards in the direction of Tekoa; and an east-west road will be laid in northern Samaria, near Bara El Shakia.
- Water Commissioner Meir Ben-Meir will consider an NIS 150m. request to continue

separating Palestinian and Israeli water supplies in the territories.

- Some 150 state-funded apartments will be built in areas far from the center of the country.
- An additional NIS 30m. will be transferred to agriculture in priority zone B areas to allow for the transition from low- to high-tech farming.
- Moledet said it was promised nine items by Netanyahu:
  - A religious studies center will be opened at Rehelim within 60 days.
  - A road will be constructed linking Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem to the "tunnel road" from Jerusalem to Gush Etzion, and a bus route will be operated between Jerusalem and the tomb.
  - Loans of NIS 100,000 will be granted to Ma'aleh Ephraim, Kiryat Arba, Netzarim, Kfar Darom, and Morag - 50% will become a grant.
  - The prime minister will work to grant a broadcasting license to the Arutz 7 radio station within 90 days.
  - The grave of Avner Ben-Ner will be opened to visitors.
  - A bypass road will be built from Talmun-Nahliel to Kiryat Sefer.
  - A Moledet representative will be appointed to the Israel Broadcasting Authority plenum.
  - There will be an increase in the budget of the Agriculture Ministry's Green Patrol.
  - Some NIS 30m. will be put aside for housing, with Moledet having a say in where the money is spent.
- MK Eliezer Zandberg (Tsomet) agreed to vote with the government in return for being appointed a deputy speaker of the Knesset.

## Fighting a many-headed serpent

### ANALYSIS

By SARAH WOLGAST

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has smitten several of the heads springing from the political Hydra seemingly out to get him. He is no longer endangered by the NRP, Yisrael Ba'aliya, Tsomet, the Third Way and even Moledet.

But though he lops off head after head, the serpent with which he has been grappling keeps producing new heads. Now, menacingly showing its teeth is Geshet, accompanied by United Torah Judaism, which has so far been the quietest coalition member in the great budget tussle. In past years, UTJ was on the front lines from the onset of the struggle.

Given Netanyahu's track record yesterday, the odds now are, say political pundits in all corners of the arena, that he will strike down the terrible Hydra. But it will take a while longer. He cannot yet afford to let down his guard and

relax.

Though he mustered a majority in the budget-related Knesset votes yesterday, he is not entirely out of the woods. Yesterday - perhaps by coincidence and most likely not - the Hydra grew two heads simultaneously. Neither Geshet nor UTJ alone can bring down his government. Geshet and UTJ together do imperil the coalition majority. This will mean that the price they can exact by cooperating will be all the greater. Netanyahu will be unable to ignore either faction and hence will have to mollify both.

Geshet has been the most aggressive adversary with which Netanyahu has had to contend.

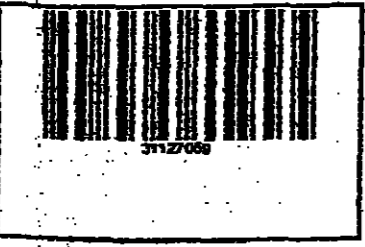
Even yesterday, after Netanyahu had triumphed over other threats, the Geshet MKs did not simply withhold their support from his government. They actually betrayed it by voting with the opposition. Had Netanyahu been able to afford a break with Geshet, this would have been the time to dump the faction, but Netanyahu dare not put Geshet in its place. He will have to buy it off.

UTJ, once it chose to finally appear on the field of battle, did so with its biggest guns blazing. It will sponsor a no-confidence vote. Its MKs declared after meeting Netanyahu and demanding more than his opening offer for baredi housing projects.

The feeling in the coalition is that if Netanyahu got out of far more complex binds, he will manage to make peace with UTJ as well.

See SERPENT, Page 2

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NEWS

in brief

Security forces on high alert for Ramadan

Security forces were on high alert yesterday, against the possibility of terrorist attacks by Jewish extremists against Palestinians as thousands of Moslems marked the first day of the month-long Ramadan holiday yesterday.

Police beefed up their presence in eastern Jerusalem as Moslem worshippers flocked to the El Aqsa Mosque for prayers. IDF forces also reportedly beefed up their presence in Samaria and Hebron.

Two infiltrators from Jordan captured

Security forces tracked down and captured two men who had infiltrated from Jordan, approximately two hours after they had broken through the border fence late Monday night near Kibbutz Yotvata. During the brief alert before they were apprehended, the Arava road was closed between Eilat and Kibbutz Yotvata. Out of concern over a possible attack, some 2,000 members of the Bnei Akiva youth movement, on an excursion near Yotvata, were taken to the kibbutz until the alert was over.

4 Jordanians jailed for plotting attacks on Israel

Four Jordanian Palestinians convicted of plotting attacks on Israelis have been sentenced to 10 to 15 years imprisonment with hard labor, a Jordanian court official said yesterday. In sentencing, Judge Yousef Faouri of the State Security Court said: "The defendants' possession of arms and explosives and their plotting attacks against Israel is a threat to the national security of Jordan." Police arrested the four in July in the southwestern district of Wadi Araba from where they allegedly planned to cross the Israeli border. In their possession were two hand grenades and several automatic rifles.

Court rejects Eskin's appeal against detention

The Jerusalem District Court yesterday rejected Avigdor Eskin's appeal against his continued detention. Judge Moshe Gal said that due to the nature of the investigation, and the fact that the period of detention is supposed to end in a couple of days, he saw no reason to overrule the Magistrate Court decision. Eskin was arrested 10 days ago on suspicion of planning to throw a pig's head onto the Temple Mount. Before going into the hearing, Eskin said that under the General Security Service investigative methods, "you can blame me for everything, including Arlosoroff's murder."

Int'l observers allowed to stay in Hebron

Israel has agreed to the renewal of the mandate for another three months of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), Foreign Ministry Director-General Eitan Bentsur said yesterday in a letter to Norway's ambassador. Bentsur said Israel also would support a further extension, if this was agreeable to the Palestinians. But he added, Israel expects there to be a dialogue on the nature and role of the TIPH in order to prevent misunderstandings and ensure its effectiveness. He asked the Norwegian envoy to convey the Israeli position to other countries participating in TIPH, including Turkey, Sweden, Italy, Switzerland and Denmark.

Public hospitals continue strike

By JUDY SIEGEL

The public hospitals will be run on a reduced Shabbat schedule from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. today as part of the continuing protest by the health workers unions against the Treasury's intentions to change the national health insurance system.

In addition, the district health offices will be closed for six hours, along with family health

(tipat halav) centers. Health fund community clinics will, however, function normally.

Health Minister Yehoshua Matza last night "strongly denounced" the planned strike by health workers. "When negotiations are proceeding with the Treasury and we hear of progress at this moment, announcing a strike is a violation of all norms, and I call on them to halt every demonstrative step."

The Israel Medical Association, the Nurses' Union and the Union of Administrative and Maintenance Workers called the strike on the eve of the scheduled vote by the Knesset on the arrangements bill, which includes sections that would, they charge, "destroy the egalitarian national health insurance system."

The unions have been manning a protest tent across from the Knesset for the past 10 days.

They have held a number of strikes since then. The Tel Aviv District Labor Court brought a halt to them by persuading the Treasury to discuss the workers' complaints, but the talks have so far been fruitless, as proposed changes are being negotiated in talks with the various parties in the coalition.

The unions said yesterday they felt promises made by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to

Health Minister Yehoshua Matza, which would in effect cancel the Treasury's proposals, will not be backed up by the Finance Ministry when the budget goes for a vote.

The hospital strike will shut down for six hours all outpatient clinics. Only vital services - such as oncology, intensive care, emergency rooms, dialysis and neonatal units - will function normally during the strike.

PA lawmakers give Arafat three-month ultimatum

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Palestinian lawmakers yesterday said they would hold off resignations and no-confidence votes for three months provided that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat deals with corruption charges within the PA and ratify laws passed by the Palestinian Legislative Council.

While some Palestinian officials appeared relieved by the decision, others claimed they were unsure if Arafat would indeed live up to his promises and meet their demands. PLC Speaker Ahmed Qurie said the council decided to wait until March, the beginning of its next semester, to allow Arafat and the PA to approve the 37 resolutions the council has drafted - including laws on the budget, political parties and press freedom.

On Sunday, Arafat tried to defuse the crisis by meeting with members of his Fatah faction who comprise two thirds of the council. Following the meeting, Fatah

sources claimed Arafat had agreed to accept the resignations of 24 cabinet members prior to a reshuffle and to sign at least 18 council resolutions.

Qurie said yesterday he had been informed that a cabinet reshuffle would take place soon, but other officials remained skeptical.

PLC member and West Bank Fatah leader Marwan Barghout said the fact that Arafat has agreed to approve resolutions and reshuffle his cabinet after a month of pressure from Fatah is positive but not enough. "And it has not solved the crisis in relations between the council and the authority," he said.

Barghout charged that the council has been transformed into nothing more than "a showcase of democracy" by the authority.

However, PLC member and Fatah representative in Hebron Jamal Shobaki said the council should give Arafat three months to act, and then exercise its right to hold a no-confidence vote.

SERPENT

Continued from Page 1

Gesher is not that simple a case. Much more than money is involved here. The Gesher faction is not homogeneous and incorporates almost all the conflicting forces pulling Netanyahu in opposing directions. Foreign Minister David Levy is the cabinet's outstanding dove and has made his continued membership in the government contingent - or so he says - on further and substantial redeployment.

Gesher MK Michael Kleiner heads the Land of Israel Lobby's Force 17, which staunchly opposes any further territorial concessions.

Gesher is embroiled in a bitter contest with Shas over who can claim credit for securing more perks for the have-nots. Since the objective is prestige, the most basic prerequisite is to produce much sound and fury and send up dramatic fireworks so those who need be impressed get the message. This means that Levy can't settle for a deal right away.

Finally, Levy has no incentive to

let Netanyahu off the hook one minute before the final gong. He and most of his faction's MKs still bear deep grudges against Netanyahu, and they will tongue-lash him and fray his nerves for as long as they can.

Levy will make sure that today - when the budget vote is finally due - he will be dramatically at center stage. He will grandstand in his best tradition.

The question in the coalition is what will happen after Netanyahu manages - assuming that he does - to lop off the Gesher head as well. It has been noted that Shas has not been overly vocal in the past days. As Shas is Gesher's single greatest competitor, the likelihood is that the next awesome head to be spawned by the Hydra will be Shas's.

When will it all be over? The most optimistic forecast comes from Absorption Minister Natan Sharansky, who placed his wager on late tonight. But coalition whip Meir Sheerit (Likud) and Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon say that legally the budget session may drag till Friday noon. Both bet it will.



Right-wing bonfire Members of the Temple Mount Faithful burn a coffin symbolizing the death of the 'State of Palestine' outside Orient House in Jerusalem yesterday, as part of a day-long protest over the Oslo peace process.

BUDGET

Continued from Page 1

"They've gone over by about NIS 2.5b.," claimed Shohat, listing a series of commitments to coalition parties and elements of the arrangements bill that have been withdrawn. However, the government remained confident

it would keep within the NIS 207.4 billion budget framework.

"The budget has so far not been broken, nor will it," said Prime Minister's Office Director-General Moshe Leon. "As of now there are no agreements, but rather understandings. Despite what the media are saying, the coalition parties have shown considerable responsibility

and not presented unreasonable demands." Calls for early elections were largely silenced following the coalition's voting lineup yesterday.

On Monday, ministers Rafael Eitan (Tsomet) and Avigdor Kahalani (The Third Way) led the call for an early general election, given the coalition's inability to work as one body.

Section-by-section voting on the budget arrangements bill is to begin at 9 a.m. today.

The Finance Committee is then to reconvene to discuss for the first time the 1998 budget bill, including alternative Treasury proposals for the various cuts voted out by MKs, including NIS 500 million in child benefit payments.

Once the committee approves the budget bill, the plenum must discuss it for six hours before voting can begin.

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon has decided that voting can continue until Friday afternoon, but opposition MKs would like to carry the debate into next week.

"There is no agreement as to the final date for discussion of the bills," said Merom. "We're not even halfway through the budget arrangements bill yet. We want to continue the debate next week, and the week after if necessary."

United Torah Judaism filed a no-confidence motion over what the party sees as budgetary discrimination against the haredi public. But a Labor Party spokesman said that since the motion is unlikely to gather the necessary 61 votes to bring the government down; it is considered more a declarative gimmick than a practical move.

Batsheva Tsur adds: The Movement for Quality Government last night threatened that it would petition the High Court of Justice unless Netanyahu revealed details of the agreements worked out with coalition partners in order to gain their approval for the budget.

Liat Collins contributed to this report.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

THE WEEKLY MEETING of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today at 1:00 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street. A Happy New Year to all.

DRIVE CAREFULLY

The unweaving of the matzeva for our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

ZELIE BAND

will take place on Friday, January 2, 1998, at 11 a.m. at the Shikun Havatikim Cemetery, Netanya.

The Pope, Band, Stein and Gal families

The Jerusalem Elwyn Family mourns the passing of

MANNY (Menachem) ROTMAN

a pioneer dedicated to improving programs for people with developmental disabilities.

Our deepest condolences to Ruth, Jennie and Joe and the entire Rotman, Cass and Shime families.

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Shiva in Toronto.

If desired, memorial donations may be made to Na'amat, or Jerusalem-Elwyn Millie Shime Centre.

With deep sorrow we announce the passing away of dear

Dr. Margot BECKER-PEISER

The funeral will take place today, 31.12.97, at 16:00, at the Kfar Shmaryahu cemetery

Family and friends

With deep anguish

EMUNAH OF AMERICA

mourns the loss of

EVA ADELMAN

Founding Chairman of World Emunah and past National President of Emunah of America

Eva was an incomparable friend and mentor to those who worked with her and those who followed her. She created a linked community of religious Zionist women around the world. We will sorely miss her vision and wisdom.

Dr. Sylvia Schonfeld, National President

United Israel Appeal of Canada Inc.

Its Officers and Staff deeply mourn the passing of

GORDY SCHWARTZ

of Montreal, Canada

Distinguished Leader and Great Friend of Israel

We extend heartfelt condolences to Donna, Richard and Jill

Harvey Wolfe President

Steven Ain Executive Vice President

Max Blankstein Chairman, IRC

Amnon Shinar Director General

TO OUR READERS

Due to technical difficulties, the 1997 photographic roundup originally scheduled to be published today will appear in Friday's issue.

CORRECTION

A photograph published on December 23 showing the lighting of Hanukka candles at a demonstration demanding the inclusion of Alzheimer's drugs in the basket of health services incorrectly identified Dr. Shlomo Ganor. He is the husband of a patient with Alzheimer's and a member of the board of the Israel Alzheimer's Association, and not as written.

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Handwritten text in Arabic script at the bottom of the page.

# Goldschmidt elected Labor faction chairman

By LIAT COLLINS

MK Elie Goldschmidt yesterday beat MK Dalit Itzik by one vote in a secret ballot to become the new Labor faction chairman, a position with the responsibility of party whip in the Knesset.



Goldschmidt was considered to be Labor leader Ehud Barak's preferred candidate, while Itzik is considered closer to former leader Shimon Peres.

The result was 17-16 with one abstention, assumed to be Ephraim Sneh.

Goldschmidt replaces MK R'anan Cohen, who was this week elected Labor party secretary-general.

Goldschmidt said the vote was close because of the stiff competition for the small number of available posts in prominent party positions, but noted the polling had been carried out in good spirits and a friendly atmosphere had prevailed throughout.

He said the job is important in helping the parliamentary fight of the opposition and in determining

how the party is perceived by the public.

"It's particularly important as an opposition party that we go out and meet the public and not just act within the House," Goldschmidt said.

"This is what I aim for us to do as soon as I take up the position."

He said it was also the opposition's job to try to democratically topple the government, "and I hope on my part that I will not be in this position [in the opposition] for too long."

At the faction meeting yesterday, Itzik wished Goldschmidt success and said "it was a pleasure to see how the contest for the post was carried out."

Former Labor leader Shimon Peres praised Cohen for his contribution in the position.

Labor leader Ehud Barak said he was sure both Itzik and Goldschmidt would continue to contribute to the party and said Cohen's appointment as secretary-general frees him up for his work running against Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.



## The art of aquaculture

Rami Alon (right), of Moshav Ein Tamar in the Arava Valley, explains the art of desert aquaculture to (from left) Agriculture and Environment Minister Rafel Eitan, Jewish Agency Settlement Department head Yehiel Leket and Jewish National Fund chairman Moshe Rivlin. They were attending the opening of a JNF fish farm consisting of 50 ponds that within three years is expected to supply 500 tons of fish annually.

# Lieberman said to be interested in Likud secretariat chairmanship

By SARAH HONIG

Avigdor Lieberman, the former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, is rumored to be planning to run for chairman of the Likud Party secretariat. The rumors are generating much unrest in the Likud.

Lieberman hotly denied yesterday that he plans to run, though he added that he won't let the party elite blacklist him and disqualify him for any office.

No one knows who began circulating the story, but it was enough to raise plenty of red flags among the party princes, who are already girding themselves for the battle to stop Lieberman - yet again.

The one post Lieberman did vie for since leaving the Prime Minister's Office was that of chairman of the World Likud, his party's sister entity in the World Zionist Organization. As soon as Lieberman announced his candidacy, he was challenged by

Communications Minister Limor Livnat. In the end a compromise candidate - Zalmi Shoval - was installed as World Likud head.

The assumption in the Likud is that if Lieberman dares toss his hat in any ring again, he would face a similar no-holds-barred fight.

The present head of the party secretariat is Health Minister Yehoshua Matza. But the new Likud central committee has yet to elect a new party secretariat and it eventually will elect its chairman. (No fixed timetables for these processes exist.)

If Matza plans to seek reelection to his old position, the odds are that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu would prevail on Lieberman not to challenge him. Despite Matza's rousing defense of his ministry's budget in recent days, he is still considered the prime minister's closest ally in the cabinet and Netanyahu is unlikely to allow him to be crossed.

# MK Poraz to head new liberal party in next election

By DAVID HARRIS

MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui) said yesterday he is beginning the process of finding candidates interested in running with him in an independent party in the next general election.

Since the last election, Poraz has broken away from his Meretz colleagues and is currently a one-man party in the Knesset.

"Under the new political system of a two-ticket vote, there is a chance that a small liberal party could succeed," said Poraz. "I am moving to bring in other people from places such as universities. So far no one has fully committed themselves."

Poraz maintains that the middle classes remain completely unrepresented in Israel and claims that no one is fighting to protect them from tax increases.

"The truth is Shinui already exists and has done since 1974,

so the basics are already in place," said Poraz.

The electoral system now allows for a vote on the peace process by supporting one candidate or another for prime minister and also a vote on economic grounds for one of the parties, added Poraz. "We must wave the flag of liberalism."

While admitting an alliance with other free-market supporters such as Dan Meridor (Likud) would be unlikely until after a successful conclusion to the peace process, Poraz admitted there are several MKs from across the political spectrum who agree with his views on the economy.

Saying he could not discuss with the government on the 1998 state budget, Poraz did say that if the budget arrangements bill had been presented on a piecemeal basis he would have supported many of its aspects.

# Russian Press Review

By Josef Begun

## Support increases for Yisrael Ba'aliya

On the eve of the 1996 Knesset elections, when most public opinion polls predicted two to five seats for Yisrael Ba'aliya, the Heker Institute accurately forecast seven seats for the party.

Results of a new poll reveal that if elections were held today, 47% of the immigrants from the former Soviet Union would vote for Yisrael Ba'aliya, as compared to 40% in the previous election.

A positive opinion of Yisrael Ba'aliya was expressed by 73%, and 77% expressed positive feelings for party chairman Natan Sharansky.

## Chekhov's heartfelt play

Evgeny Arye, artistic director of Geshen, is staging *Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov.

Liza Chudnovsky, in *Novosti Nedeli*, says she believes that this Israeli production is much more faithful to Chekhov's interpretation than Stanislavsky's famous Moscow production a century ago.

*Three Sisters*, like Chekhov's short stories, is a play about funny, absurd and unhappy people," she writes. "They are unhappy not because of ideological reasons, but for simple, human existential ones. The characters are believable not only for Russian audiences but for spectators everywhere."

## Budget passions stir

The Russian press discusses the anti-budget riots within the government coalition and the attempts of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yankov Neeman to reach a compromise with minimal concessions. In *Vremya*, Rivka Rabinovich says, "Increased unemployment and rising economic crises call for a revision of the original budget. However, it is unrealistic to expect changes from those who 'steer' the economy. The budget, economic stagnation and unemployment may become the sandbank that will cause the government ship to run aground." The editorial in *Novosti Nedeli*,

however, points out that neither Netanyahu nor Neeman will be able to avoid fulfilling budgetary demands from all the coalition factions, thus the approved budget will differ considerably from the draft. For this reason, the editor-in-chief of *Novosti Nedeli*, Efraim Ganor, writes: "It is clear that Yisrael Ba'aliya must fight for financing the program for professional employment of immigrant scientists; expanding financial support for repairs in Amidar apartments; and increasing mortgage and rental benefits. There can be no compromises on these issues."

An entirely different approach is taken by Dov Kontorer in *Vesti*. He states, "Escalating social hysteria is as inappropriate today as it was in the past. After 50 years, Israel is still learning to live within its means, subordinating the volume of consumption to the tough dictates of the economy. If we don't accept this truth, our economy will burst like a bubble." George Mordel of *Vremya* gives his prognosis: "The fight within the coalition doesn't mean that the budget won't be ratified. If the National Religious Party overturns the government, it will get four seats instead of nine [according to the polls]. If Kleiner's team unseats the government, there are no guarantees that a new government will carry out the demands to retain all the settlements in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. According to a Shas survey, 69% of its voters won't blindly follow the directives of Ovadia Yosef and help the Left again. Is it really worth bantling for new elections?"

## The 'State' of Israel

An original way to solve Israel's security problem was proposed by A. Victorov, an activist from Memorial, a Society for Victims of the Holocaust. Israel should change its status, Victorov believes. Monetary and moral support emanating from the US are not accidental. Financial aid to Israel is fundamental to US foreign policy. The arms race is escalating in Arab countries with the potential danger for nuclear, chemical, or germ warfare. These growing hostilities call for a qualitative leap: Israel and the US must unite as one state.

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## NEWS

in brief

**'Ben-Ari infiltrated Israel Police'**

Zvi Ben-Ari, formerly known as Gregory Lerner, succeeded in planting at least one of his men in the Israel Police and his arrest nine months ago stopped further infiltrations, according to Police Dep.-Cmdr. Moshe Mizrahi, head of the National Crime Squad.

Speaking at a farewell ceremony for outgoing Inspector-General Assaf Hefetz, Mizrahi also noted that Hefetz had been responsible for recognizing that Ben-Ari posed a danger.

Ben-Ari has been charged with carrying out bank fraud and other financial crimes totalling some \$100 million. *Itim*

**Iran releases four Palestinian prisoners**

Iranian officials yesterday announced the release of four Palestinians who had been arrested in the Gulf War during the 1991.

The PA's Brig.-Gen. Khader Laham said he received an announcement from Iranian officials and the four were returning to their families in Iraq. He said the officials had promised to release another twelve Palestinians still being held in Iran by February.

Palestinian officials praised the Iranian decision, noting that relations between the Palestinian Authority and Iran have improved since PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's trip to Tehran earlier this month. *Mohammed Najib and Margot Dudkevitch*

**Reports: Jordanian diplomat's car vandalized**

A Jordanian diplomat's car was attacked and damaged in a Tel Aviv neighborhood last week, Jordanian newspapers reported yesterday.

It was the second time in three months that the diplomat's car was vandalized while it was parked outside his home, the newspapers quoted Jordan's ambassador to Israel, Omar Rifai, as saying.

Rifai said the reason for the attacks was not known and that the unidentified diplomat was not in the car during the incidents.

There was no immediate comment from Israeli officials on the incidents. *AP*

**Small claims made larger**

The Small Claims Court will soon be able to hear cases involving sums of up to NIS 12,000 following a new regulation signed by Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi yesterday.

The regulation still has to receive formal approval from the Knesset's Law Committee. It is in line with recommendations for a reform of the court system presented by a committee headed by Supreme Court Justice Theodor Orr.

*Batsheva Tsur***Habad wins suit for Beverly Hills hanukkia**

The Los Angeles Habad movement this week won a federal court appeal against a suit filed by the American Jewish Congress against the movement's lighting a hanukkia opposite the Beverly Hills Municipality.

The AJC claimed the hanukkia violated the constitutional separation of religion and state. While the suit was pending last year, the municipality denied Habad permission to put up the hanukkia.

A federal judge ruled there was no constitutional violation, since the hanukkia was not a permanent structure. As Habad representatives lit the Beverly Hills hanukkia last evening, the AJC announced it would continue its fight against the movement. *Itim*

**Animal rights activists campaign in Tel Aviv**

Passersby in Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center yesterday afternoon were treated to free vegetarian food courtesy of the animal rights group, Anonimus.

Group members handed out fliers encouraging a vegetarian lifestyle with a menu of soya-based dishes, listing the ingredients as "0 percent cholesterol; 0 percent blood; 0 percent pain."

They said they tried to keep the event positive, and did not station themselves near any of the major fast-food meat chains, as well as foregoing the slogan "Meat is Murder" in favor of the less blunt "Let ALL the Animals Live."

Anonymous activist Yossi Wolfson said that some 150 million animals are slaughtered a year in Israel for the food industry. *Liat Collins*

# Givatayim man shoots wife, kills self

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

A man shot his wife four times before committing suicide at the couple's Givatayim apartment yesterday morning.

Yuvai Kotzer, 37 wounded his wife Sima, 35 and then shot himself in the head. His wife, who was hit in the chest, was admitted in serious condition to Sheba Hospital, where she underwent surgery.

The couple's two daughters, aged nine and 10, were not at home when the shooting occurred.

According to an initial police investigation, Kotzer arrived at the apartment yesterday morning after his wife turned him out together with one of the couple's daughters the night before. According to Kotzer's brother, he took his daughter to his sister for the night.

Neighbors said screams and shouts followed by shots were heard coming from the apartment and at 10:30 a.m. the local police received a call from Kotzer's sister warning police that her brother planned to kill his wife.

A policeman phoned the apartment and spoke with Kotzer, who told him to send an ambulance, because he had shot his wife. Within five minutes police arrived at the scene and broke through a window after discovering the front door was locked.

As police were breaking into the apartment, another shot was heard as Kotzer shot himself. He left a letter at the scene.

Following news of the incident, neighbors gathered at the entrance to the apartment block in Rehov Herzog shocked by the tragedy. "I can't believe it happened.

They always held hands and were so nice. If it happened to them, then it can happen to anybody," said one neighbor.

Yitzhak Ben-Shahak, head of the municipality's welfare services, said the couple had been seeing a local psychologist for some months, after the headmistress of the elder daughter's school noticed she suffered from her parents' constant bickering.

The husband's relatives, who live in Kiryat Ono, were caring for the couple's children yesterday. Police said charges were filed against one of the parents four years ago for allegedly abusing one of their daughters. But police and welfare officials stressed that no further complaints had been registered with the authorities and neither the husband nor wife had lodged a complaint with them.

# Man held for killing his sisters in Umm el-Fahm

By DAVID RUDGE

A man suspected of murdering two of his sisters at their home in Umm el-Fahm was yesterday remanded in custody for 15 days by the Hadera Magistrate's Court.

Police believe that the suspect, Osiel Mehajneh, 24, shot his two sisters to death with a pistol. He also allegedly fired at his father, but missed.

Mehajneh has denied the allegations, claiming that he did not own a pistol and that he was in fields of Kafir Manda, near Nazareth, at the time of the double killing.

The court, however, decided that there was sufficient evidence linking the suspect with the murders, even though the weapon used has not yet been found.

Superintendent Ety Meirson, spokeswoman for the Ha'emakim Police, said the incident occurred at the Mehajneh family's home in Umm el-Fahm late on Monday night.

Only the suspect's parents and the two sisters, Samaher, 21, and Maislin, 15, were in the house at the time.

"From initial inquiries it appears that the motive for the murder was the fact that the two sisters had recently submitted a complaint to the police about their brother, which had led to a dispute," said Meirson.

The suspect was arrested in the early hours of yesterday morning in Kafir Manda. Police believe he had gone there to try and hide among other members of the family who live in the village.

## IDF tries to make reservists feel at home

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Government worker who evades reserve duty? Watch out, you may lose your job if the army has its way. Private businessman who hassles employees for serving in reserve duty? Beware, you may lose your contracts with the defense establishment.

These are just some of the steps the IDF wants to take in its war to halt evasion of reserve duty and discrimination against those Israeli men who do serve.

Maj.-Gen. Gaby Ashkenazy, assistant to the deputy chief of general staff, announced yesterday that the IDF has started implementing a series of measures to make the reserve obligation more comfortable.

Research told the army what they already knew, the best way to get better use out of a reserve soldier is to focus on the relatively small homogeneous groups of battalions.

Reserve battalion commanders have now been given greater flexibility on how they divide the mission assigned to them among their members, the idea being that they can shorten, split or even dismiss call-up papers.

"The result is that the division of burden today is better and the average length of duty has been reduced from 24 days to, in some cases, between 10 and 17 days," Ashkenazy said. "We want the battalion commander to handle justice in the unit."

The army has also greatly improved conditions for reserve units and has, for example procured new webbing and equipment, renovated border outposts with new dining rooms, barracks and installed air conditioning.

Starting next year, battalions will be able to organize "family days," where reservists and their families will meet on a social level either at a picnic site or at the IDF's resort in Givat Olga. The army will provide funds for entertainment, Ashkenazy said.

He added that the three-day training period reserve soldiers undergo before general patrol duties has been greatly enhanced at the three training bases.

The plan to improve reserve conditions began in the summer of 1996 and has been nearly completed, Ashkenazy said.

Reserve units have also improved their link with soldiers and installed faxes so reservists seeking dismissal on grounds of, for example, a birth, no longer need to physically appear at the unit's headquarters but can fax in a request and documents.

Noting that drivers in reserve duty bear a large burden of the burden, Ashkenazy said the army has started signing on released conscripts for "short-term regular duty" as drivers, thus reducing the need to call up reserve drivers and also helping unemployment.

Ashkenazy's announcement follows last week's ratification in the Knesset of the reserve bill, which limited the amount of days the IDF can call up citizens.

All these measures will help, but senior IDF officers quietly admit that the core of the problem rests with society. Israeli attitudes toward reserve duty are shaped not only by their desire to be "with the guys" but from pressure put on them not to go from their families, workplace and society as a whole.

And this is a phenomenon that the IDF is largely prevented from confronting. Ashkenazy said the army does not accept evasion and wants laws enacted to help them fight it. He cited the two measures mentioned above as examples of what should be done.

The army has long declared that regular service would not be cut before reserve duty is shortened. Because of this, Ashkenazy said, the IDF has cut by 50 percent the number of reserve days over the past five years.



US Ambassador to Israel Edward Walker (l) meets with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai in Tel Aviv yesterday. (Yael Someth/Israel Sun)

## Walker hopes for stronger strategic ties between US, Israel

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

New US Ambassador to Israel Edward Walker told Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai in their first meeting yesterday that he hopes the strategic ties between the two countries will "deepen and strengthen" during his term here, defense officials said.

"We have the highest degree of interest in sustaining Israel's defensive capabilities to meet all threats," Walker told reporters prior to the hour-long meeting. "We will work together to help you do so."

According to defense officials, Mordechai and Walker spoke of the strategic dialogue between Jerusalem and Washington, as well as cooperation in the US-supported "Homa" missile defense project, the Arrow missile and the Katyusha-hunting Nautilus laser gun.

Mordechai raised the issue of Iran's attempts to build nuclear weapons and long-range missiles and called on the US to help halt Teheran's efforts, since it was a potential danger not only to the region but to the Western world.

Mordechai told Walker that progress was possible in the peace talks with the Palestinians

and even with Syria "if the other side understands Israel's security needs," a Defense Ministry statement said.

Mordechai invited Walker to participate in the ceremony marking the arrival of the first F-15I fighter jets, which are expected to land on January 19, a Defense Ministry statement said.

Mordechai also asked Walker to extend season's greetings to his US counterpart, Secretary of Defense William Cohen.

Cohen was to have visited Israel last week, but he canceled his visit to the Middle East shortly beforehand.

## Herzliya City Council member held for sexually abusing stepson

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

A Herzliya City Council member suspected of sexually abusing his stepson and other minors was yesterday remanded in custody for six days by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court.

Police said the suspect confessed to the charges against him and asked the court to remand him in custody to enable them to continue their investigation. The court issued a ban on the publication of his name and picture.

The suspect recorded his activities in a diary, police said. "I feel as though I have crossed the line between the love a father has for his son and sexual attraction towards him," he wrote in the 50-

page diary, which apparently also revealed that the suspect also abused other youths.

The suspect was arrested Monday following a decision by his stepson, a 26-year old photography student residing in New York, reportedly to avenge "the person who ruined his life."

The arrest was based on a detailed complaint transferred to Herzliya Police claiming that the stepson was sexually abused over a ten-year period, since he was five.

A police search of the stepfather's house revealed pornographic films of sexual relationships between adults and minors as well as evidence suggesting that he suffers from mental problems.

The suspect made up a game named "the victim" in which he engaged in indecent and abusive activities with children, said police representative Dov Dolev in the remand request submitted to Judge Rami Amir.

The suspect's wife, who is the biological mother of the stepson, was present at the legal hearing and maintained she did not know anything about her husband's activities. She said he had showed deep concern for his stepson's well-being and cared for him deeply.

The suspect is very active in organizations that protect citizens' rights and that work against family abuse, a source close to him said.

## Prime Minister's Office audit clears jubilee expenses

By JAY BUSHINSKY

After auditing the financial activities of the American Association for the Anniversary Celebrations, the Prime Minister's Office announced yesterday that "all expenditures were appropriately made."

The fiscal examination was launched after charges were leveled by Meretz MK Ran Cohen that the association's directors, Merv Adelson and Marvin Josephson, had received excessive and unwarranted payments.

This charge was rejected out of hand by a senior government official. He said Adelson and Josephson were "volunteers" and that they had laid out money for various expenses from their private resources long before reimbursement was made.

A special communique issued by the Prime Minister's Office said the two had "transferred a bill for \$306,000 to their counterparts in Israel in respect of expenditure incurred in the organizing of events in

the United States." It said the office's director-general, Moshe Leon, appointed a special committee to check the association's bills, identifying the members as Shimon Stein, legal adviser to the prime minister, Ami Talmor, financial controller of the Prime Minister's Office, and Uzi Berliski, the government internal controller.

Stein said there were additional expenses such as flights to Israel, hotel accommodations, and fees for attorneys and accountants that totalled \$170,000, for which no reimbursement was sought.

"We conducted a thorough examination of each expense and found well organized books, receipts, and documentation," Stein said.

"Our examination revealed that all expenses were made according to accepted norms. There were legal alliances and everything was done in an appropriate and organized manner for the purpose of organizing these events."

The committee recommended that Leon authorize reimbursement in full.

**In memoriam**

Yehuda Wachsmann, whose son Nahshon was killed by Hamas in 1994, lights a candle last night at a ceremony at Jerusalem's Zion Square sponsored by Women Shaping the Future, in memory of children wounded or killed in terrorist suicide bombings. *(Kevin Unger)*

# 5 charged in Arad Festival tragedy

By BATSHEVA TSUR

Two and a half years after the tragedy at the Arad Festival, in which three youngsters were killed and some 100 injured, the state has brought charges against five people. They were charged yesterday in the Ashdod Magistrate's Court with a variety of crimes, from manslaughter to negligence. The tragedy took place on July

18, 1995, during a midnight performance of the Machina rock group, when a large crowd tried to press its way into the outdoor stadium in the southern city to hear the group's farewell performance.

According to the charge sheet, Yossi Bender - owner of the Hadraa ticket agency, which was responsible for selling tickets for the show - sold a far larger num-

ber of tickets than permitted for the performance and a much larger number than the area could hold.

He is also charged with wiping out of the computer the sale of 5,000 tickets to make it appear he did not oversell.

Avinoam Verbner, the director-general of the Arad municipality who headed the festival preparations, was charged with failing to

check that the site could hold a huge crowd and failing to examine the gates leading into the outdoor facility. He also did not check that those without tickets did not try to get in, the charge sheet says.

Charged along with them was Moshe Glantz, who was responsible for coordinating between the festival committee and the contractors. He was also supposed to be personally responsible for

preparing the site for a large crowd but failed to take the relevant professional steps, the charge sheet says.

Two police officers, Lt.-Cmdr. Yosef Avni, the commander of the Negev District, and Ch.-Supt. Shlomo Abutbul, in charge of patrol forces in the Negev, were also indicted. They were responsible for police activities at the site during the performance.

# Golan leaders urge Eitan to fight rabies

By DAVID RIDGE

Golan Heights leaders called on Agriculture and Environment Minister Rafael Eitan yesterday to declare war on wild animals in the region following a dramatic rabies scare in Katzrin.

A wild animal, believed to be a jackal, ran amok through the streets of the township early yesterday morning - biting two workers and several dogs.

The workers, who had been cleaning the streets, were both sent for examinations and the dogs believed to have been bitten by the animal, were put in quarantine.

Witnesses said the behavior of the animal, first reported to be a fox and later a jackal, indicated that the animal was rabid.

Police were alerted and a hunting party, including a veterinary surgeon and dog catchers, started to track the animal. A jackal was found, cornered and shot a few hours later near to Katzrin.

The carcass was sent for examination to see if the animal did have rabies and whether it was the one that had bitten the workers and the dogs carrier.

The incident follows the death of three people from rabies this year, one of them a soldier who was bitten by a wild animal while sleeping in his tent on the Golan Heights.

The rabies scare has also highlighted what cattle and sheep breeders on the Golan have described as a growing problem in the region - attacks by wild animals on livestock.

"I'm not scared of Syrian President Hafez Assad, nor of war, not the present government and not even that of former prime minister Shimon Peres - regarding our lives here," said Golan regional council chairman Yehuda Wolman. "But if you ask me as a father of two young children who love animals whether the rabies threat scares me, the answer is yes," he said.

Wolman yesterday sent an urgent cable to Eitan demanding that he give orders to vaccinate pets and all wild animals that can be immunized in the region. He also demanded animals that cannot be immunized should be killed - including foxes, jackals and even wolves which are a protected species.

Agriculture Ministry spokesman Naftali Yaniv said Eitan had given the necessary instructions and a campaign to immunize or eradicate animals had started.

He noted, however, that animal rights groups favored putting vaccine in carcasses left in the open so that predators would be immunized when they ate from the lures.

"The problem with jackals is that for some reason they don't go to the lures so there is no way of vaccinating them and the only alternative will be to kill them," said Yaniv.

"Another problem is that these wild animals know no boundaries and the only way the problem can really be tackled is if neighboring countries, as well as the Palestinians, also take action," he said.

Uzi Collins adds: A group of teenagers at the Kfar Hayarok agricultural boarding school have mobilized a fundraising effort to vaccinate and neuter cats who live on the school grounds.

The youths said yesterday this is the best way to deal with the rabies problem and control the size of the animal population in the area.

The vaccination campaign is an effort to avoid mass killings of the cats which have been carried out by municipal veterinarians in an attempt to reduce the rabies risk.

The youths, led by 17-year-olds Noa Nevo, Rahel Elyahu and Elik Shemesh, said they wanted to show there is an alternative way of dealing with the problem and hope they will act as an example to other boarding schools and institutions.

# Greek Orthodox patriarch slams closures

Greek Orthodox Patriarch Diodoros I yesterday told Israeli officials that the repeated closures of the West Bank neither provided protection for the residents of Jerusalem nor did they help advance the peace process.

The patriarch, the country's senior Christian cleric, was speaking at President Ezer Weizman's annual reception for the leaders of the Christian communities at Beit Hanassi. Addressing both Palestinians and Israelis, Diodoros condemned the acts of terror which took innocent lives, but he was also critical of the usual Israeli response to terror acts closures which cut off the Palestinians from Jerusalem.

"The strict measures for protection, such as the enforced closure of Jerusalem and the isolation of the holy city, neither contribute to security nor advance the peace process," said the patriarch, in an address read by Metropolitan Timothy, secretary of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

Weizman told the assembled clerics that despite the fact that the relations between Israel and the Palestinians were "in a little bit of a crisis," he was hopeful concerning the future of the peace process. If, 20 years ago, anyone would have prophesied that Israel would make peace with Egypt and Jordan and be involved in peace talks with the



President Ezer Weizman (second left) shares a toast with Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah (left), Armenian Patriarch Torok Manooagian (second right) and Deputy Religious Affairs Minister Yigal Bibi at the annual reception for leaders of the Christian communities at Beit Hanassi yesterday.

Palestinians, he would not have believed it, Weizman said.

In order for the peace process to progress, he said, both Israel and the Palestinians would have

to compromise.

"One thing is sure. Both sides will not get what they want. We will have to share it," Weizman said.

Deputy Religious Affairs Minister Yigal Bibi spoke of Israel's commitment to religious liberty and freedom of access to the holy places, but he also

stressed that Jerusalem would remain under Israeli control.

"We promise that Jerusalem will remain united and under Israeli rule," Bibi said.



**Knesset stress test**  
Dr. Helen White, of Jerusalem's Hadassah-University Hospital in Ein Kerem, checks Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon's pulse rate yesterday during Knesset health day. Staff from the hospital's heart institute visited the Knesset and examined 300 people, including 70 MKs and ministers. (Avi Hayoun)

# US Jewish newspaper editor quits after anti-PM remarks

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK - Two months after his Milwaukee newspaper ran an editorial calling on Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to resign, it is the editor of the *Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle* who is on his way out the door.

The resignation of Andrew Muchin, a 14-year veteran of the weekly federation-owned newspaper in Milwaukee, is linked to the controversial editorial, according to accounts at week's end in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

However, Muchin and the federation leadership declined to comment. The October 17 editorial, coming after the bungled assassination plot

in Amman, called Netanyahu's administration the "most incompetent" in Israel's history and said the prime minister should resign.

A week later, the federation, which owns the paper, published a front-page statement saying that the editorial did not represent the opinion of the *Chronicle's* editorial committee or the federation's directors.

The editorial drew indignant criticism as well as hearty applause from its readers, who seemed as agitated about the mission of a federation newspaper as the political position its editorial took.

The *Jewish Chronicle* is one of dozens of English-language Jewish newspapers in the US, many of which are owned by the local

Jewish federations. Virtually all federation papers practice some form of self-censorship to avoid offending major donors or their causes.

Although many have serious reporting, as a group these papers have long been dubbed the "weakies," whose pages are often heavy on federation festivities and light on communal problems or scandals.

"Federations are dependent on their contributors," said Rebecca Kaplan Boroson, editor of the independent *Jewish Standard* in northern New Jersey. "When you work for a federation in any capacity, you have all those people as your bosses, and you are vulnerable."

# Two LA synagogues attacked by arsonists

By TOM TUGEND

LOS ANGELES - A task force of federal and local officials is investigating two fires, apparently set by arsonists, at neighboring Orthodox synagogues in the city's Fairfax district. Authorities have not ruled out the possibility of hate crimes, although the usual antisemitic graffiti were absent.

The Sunday evening fires blackened and damaged congregations Kehillas Yaakov and Shaarei Tefilah, on the same block of Beverly Boulevard.

A student arriving for a 9 p.m. Talmud class on Sunday discovered the fire at Kehillas Yaakov, a congregation of 100 families. Damage was estimated at \$7,000 to \$10,000. The fire at Shaarei Tefilah, which apparently burned only briefly, was discovered Monday morning. Damage to the building was put at several thousand dollars.

Authorities are taking the incidents seriously. Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan expressed his shock and ordered increased police patrols in the area.

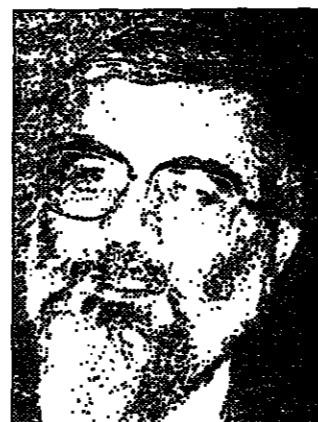
"Our police and fire departments, along with the FBI and federal Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms officers have been on the scene and will investigate these fires thoroughly," said Riordan. The officials are members of the House of Worship Task Force, set up to probe 1996 arson attacks on black churches in the South.

# Government reform group appeals Pinhasi's sentence

By BATSHEVA TSUR

The Movement for Quality Government yesterday added a request to its appeal to the Supreme Court against the leniency of the sentence given Shas MK Rafael Pinhasi. It is now calling for the court to annul the plea bargain he made with the state.

The movement requested yesterday that the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court decision of two weeks ago - under which Pinhasi received a suspended sentence - be overturned and that the attorney-general and the state attorney be ordered to appeal the lenient sentence Pinhasi received.



Rafael Pinhasi

In yesterday's request, the movement said the magistrate's court decision was highly unreasonable and did not take into account relevant material.

The addition to the petition calls on the attorney-general and the Speaker of the Knesset to prevent Pinhasi from continuing to hold the chairmanship of the Knesset House Committee.

"It is not to the public's benefit that the plea bargain was signed, since Pinhasi admitted to financial irregularities and should not be allowed to return to public activity as if nothing happened," the petition says.

# Police will have power to confiscate drivers' licenses

By HAIM SHAPIRO

Police soon will be able to immediately suspend the driver's license of anyone found committing a serious offense.

The move is part of an experiment aimed at reducing road accidents. It is due to be implemented in mid-January by the traffic police, in coordination with the Transport Ministry's National Authority for Road Safety. It will be conducted for three months on the Tel Aviv-Haifa Highway and the Zichron Ya'acov-Yokne'am Highway. At present, a driver committing

a serious offense must report to a police station a day or two after the offense is committed. Under the experimental system, officers are to be called to the scene of the offense, where they are to suspend the license for a month on the spot. The driver is then to stand trial within the month.

A driver whose license is suspended is to be given the choice of allowing an alternate driver to drive his car, accompanied by the police, to the nearest police station or allowing the police to have it towed to the nearest police station.

"We are interested in seeing

that committing a traffic offense does not pay at all," said Shmuel Hershtkovitz, director of the authority.

In a related development, the National Council for the Prevention of Accidents announced that in a spot check which its volunteers made on headlights of some 3,000 vehicles around the country, about 20 percent of the headlights were found to have faults. The council noted that this was actually an improvement over last year, when about 30 percent of all the headlights checked were found to be faulty.

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### Our backward glance

Everyone is doing it, so let's get on with it. Fasten your seat belts for Column One's opinionated zip through the year that was.

Don't expect any pre-millennial predictions. Journalists may have a slightly better track record than Tarot-card readers or economists, but that's not saying much. Personally, since I left home at age 18, I've never successfully predicted what I would be doing a year hence.

The only truly great predictors of our century have been the science-fiction writers, starting with Jules Verne and H.G. Wells, and on to Isaac Asimov and the amazing Arthur C. Clark. They are the real prophets of the millennium, but their visions are long-term and they disdain the trivial - as they should.

French astrologers are reported to be in shameful retreat this end-of-year because last December their global band of charlatans failed utterly to predict the unexpected event of 1997: the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in Paris.

(One made a feeble effort to cover herself last week by unconvincingly predicting that a "world famous celebrity" will die in 1998. Yeah, right, and the Middle East will remain problematic.) Even if the crystal balls had been all aglow with Mercedes skidding through Seine tunnels, the predictors would have still missed the most amazing aspect of the tragedy - the nearest thing we have seen to a Western nervous breakdown since Victory-Europe Day after World War II.

#### Boo-hoo's cool

Five months later, there have been many explanations for the wave of grief, but few solid conclusions. A significant clue came last week from a British psychiatric clinic that reported a dramatic drop in admissions for psychological problems since the Diana funeral.

Common sense could agree that the Western psyche may have been badly in need of a good weep. All that cynicism, self-awareness, political correctness, information overload and dieting had to be heading somewhere. The only relief left after a hard day's work appeared to be a salad, a glass of mineral water and some smart-ass comedy on television.

To quote *Babylon 5*, "It was the year we took back what was ours" - our human right to have a good bawl over something that moved us and to hell with what the boss, the spouse, or anyone else thinks.

It was somehow odd that the much greater Mother Teresa went quietly to her rest, even the grateful and sad Indian masses were restrained and dignified. But as her brother Earl Spencer said, Diana was "the essence of duty, style and beauty," and we sure as hell were going to miss that rare combination in a world

awash with boorishness, greed, and self-righteous preachers. To hell with cool, boo hoo! (Incidentally, in 1998 I want a mass uprising against "cool." Can we double the vocabulary of American teenagers and celebrities by teaching their other brain cell another word?)

#### Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

#### Monkey business

So Andrew Grove, the CEO of Intel, is *Time* magazine's man of the year? Apart from our unbridled admiration for another Holocaust survivor and penniless immigrant who became a billionaire and changed history, it still is a good choice.

The Internet may have proved that a million monkeys on a million typewriters can't produce a Shakespearean canon, but 1997 continued to prove that the march of science remains awesome.

High tech also has acquired a certain elegance that is attracting in droves those middle-aged people who should be complaining (as Queen Elizabeth did) that the world is moving too fast and they want to get off. Women too, who used to loathe technology as a "guy" thing, have been seduced by the Pentium. Maybe now we'll get some help manuals written by real humans.

Not just elegance, but heart. Many people had forgotten that NASA had prepared a little gift for July 4th this year until they woke up to the exciting countdown of the Mars Pathfinder mission landing on the Red Planet. It was all technology and robots yet somehow, alongside Mir, one of the most human of space stories. Perhaps it was the tiny little Sojourner rover bravely clunking over rocks called Barnacle Bill and Scooby Doo. It was a child-sized mission and all the cuter for it. Incidentally, it was also the news item that finally secured the Internet as prime time, with millions of visits to the Mars Web site on the first day.

#### Dear Great...

And just in case you think the '97 world was all about progress and over-sophistication, let us take a moment of silence in honor of North Korea for reminding us how far the human race still has to go. In the middle of this year's disastrous national famine the nation's "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il was solemnly promoted to "Great Leader." The people may be starving, but the government news agency informed a breathless world that Nature herself responded with "jubilation."

Great natural phenomena unfolded to mark the event. These included the landing of a white sea cucumber by a fisherman and spontaneous, prolific blossoming of pear and apricot trees. Our people are hungry? Let them eat hype.

The second part of this review will appear Friday.

# India's missed opportunity

Six years after its launch, New Delhi's ambitious economic reform plan is grinding to a halt



Indian martial arts performers in Bombay last week. Is India's effort to undo its socialist economy a losing battle?

(AP)

By DEXTER FILKINS

NEW DELHI, India - At a recent economic conference here, one of India's more self-confident politicians was touting the country's bright business prospects to a group of foreigners when the electricity in the room failed.

Talking straight through the blackout, Parliament member Rajesh Pilot told the participants, "We are very hopeful."

Power failures at five-star hotels are among this country's least pressing economic problems, but the incident at the Taj Palace earlier this month underscored India's halting march to economic liberalization, which affects everything from the price of rice in the most remote village to the flow of electricity in the nation's capital.

Six years after this nation of 950 million embarked on a monumental effort to dismantle its socialist economy, the process has entered an uncertain time. The economy, after several years of impressive growth, has begun to slow. Relics of the Soviet-style system survive intact.

The slowdown in the Indian economy has coincided with the tailspin of the economies of East Asia. Although economists say India's troubles are largely home-grown, they say dithering by the country's leaders could ensure that India misses an opportunity to set itself apart from the rest of Asia.

"With the crisis in Southeast Asia, Western investors will be looking to India," said Gerald Segal of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

"But one senses there is a window that is about to be missed." With the country's political leaders locked in paralyzing, petty quarrels, many business operators in India say they fear the country is stalling just as it should be finishing the job of liberalization.

"It's very frustrating," said Sanjeev Nanavati, an investment banker for Standard Chartered Bank in Bombay. "Investors see a situation like this and they don't know what is going to happen next."

The catalyst for the malaise is the recent collapse of the Indian government. The 7-month-old government of Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral fell last month after a minor dispute prompted the Congress-I Party, which has governed the country for most of the 50 years since independence, to withdraw its support.

The fall of Gujral's government, India's fourth in two years, cleared the way for nationwide elections early next year and shelved an array of reform measures whose passage had been awaited eagerly by foreign investors.

The Gujral government's demise came as the Indian economy, which only two years ago was growing at a 7 percent rate, began to run out of steam. Economists predict that this year the Indian economy may grow by little more than 5%, and maybe less. The benchmark index of the Bombay Stock Exchange has dropped around 20% since the spring.

Moody's Investors Service recently downgraded Indian bonds to the lowest investment grade. The crisis guaranteed India sev-

eral more months of political instability, which analysts say has forced a succession of weak governments to shy away from offending the special interests blocking further reform.

The effort to dismantle the country's centrally planned economy got under way in 1991, when an economic crisis forced the country to the brink of collapse. Governments since have removed restrictions on foreign investment, cut tariffs and tossed out price controls.

The results have been impressive. With the United States leading the way, direct foreign investment has poured into the country and this year could top \$3 billion - the most ever in a single year. In six years, exports have doubled. Not only has India's economy grown at a robust pace, it has avoided the traumatic adjustments suffered in some of the Eastern European countries. The newly rich now flaunt their wealth in every large Indian city.

Fifty years ago, billboards bearing the slogan "Be Indian - Buy Indian" rang with the same idealism that inspired Mohandas K. Gandhi in his fight to end British colonial rule. India's centuries-old caste system and its millions of poor seemed to confirm the need for economics that redistributed the wealth.

Those trying to push through reforms ask for patience when confronted by business people complaining that they are moving too slowly. The politicians point to the size of the Indian nation, its 500 million voters, 21 major lan-

guages, 50,000 trade unions and 530 political parties.

Many Indian business people are running out of patience. A growing number complain that it is not India's varied electorate that is hampering reform but the politicians in New Delhi themselves.

"This corrupt, polluted city, its resident leaders and bureaucrats, today hold the destiny of the entire nation hostage to their greed, their ignorance of everything outside the sphere of their self-interest and their lack of vision," columnist K.P.S. Gill wrote recently for the *Pioneer*, one of the country's largest newspapers.

Business people eager to compete in the international economy say they need the government to complete the process of reform - and then get out of the way. They refer derisively to the "Steel Frame," the corrupt, elephantine bureaucracy that demands bribes, but still can't perform.

Worse yet for frustrated business people, there is no guarantee that the economic reforms will continue even after next year's elections, scheduled for February and March. The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, which many here predict to win the nationwide elections, promises to allow foreign investors to help develop roads, power plants and high-tech projects.

But the BJP may keep out foreign companies that want to sell consumer goods such as toothpaste, junk food and stereos. The BJP slogan: "Microchips, not potato chips." The most likely outcome of the upcoming elec-

tions, analysts say, is a coalition government with no majority in Parliament. Such a government probably would not enact the unpopular measures needed to kick-start India's economic reform: firing public employees, deregulating the financial sector and eliminating the subsidies that consume nearly 15% of India's gross domestic product.

Recently, both the national and state governments seemed incapable of decisive action. When public employees went on strike, Gujral gave 5 million of them a raise and raised taxes to pay for it. When the government in Haryana state tried to reduce the subsidy for electricity, angry farmers blocked the roads, and burned railway stations, and the state government reversed ground.

"I don't expect to see any major push for reform out of the next government," said Saugata Bhattacharya, an analyst for the Investment Research and Information Service in New Delhi.

Despite the uncertainty, some analysts remain optimistic about India's future. Even with the slowdown, most economists are predicting moderate growth over the next year. Compared to the rest of Asia, where many economies are contracting, that's likely to attract attention.

Stephen R. du Mont, a business consultant based in Utah, says he gave up on India a decade ago. Today, he's back, and he says approvals he once waited years for now take weeks.

"This country has come a long way," du Mont said. (LA Times)

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# Annan expected to OK Iraq deal this week

## Baghdad cuts food rations ahead of oil-for-food pact

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is expected to approve Iraq's oil-for-food plan by the end of the week, a UN spokesman said on Monday.

UN spokesman Fred Eckhardt said Iraq on Saturday submitted the remainder of the plan or annexes to Denis Halliday, the UN representative in Baghdad, and the papers were being forwarded to New York. He said he expected Annan to get the final copy, with a recommendation from UN officials, by late today.

"We would hope that the package could be approved by the end

of the week," he said.

Iraq suspended oil exports December 5 to protest delays in receiving food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies for its people suffering under more than seven years of sanctions. It has said it would begin oil supplies again once Annan approves the plan for the next six months.

Under the program, Iraq can sell \$2 billion of oil every six months to buy goods for its people. The plan began a year ago and was renewed by the Security Council in

December at the same rate. But the council will consider whether to raise the amount of oil that can be sold after Annan submits another report on the program by the end of January.

Halliday and other UN officials monitoring the scheme in Baghdad say the money is too little and have suggested it be doubled.

UN officials as well as most UN Security Council members say the program has malfunctioned since its inception a year ago and has too many delays. UN aid agencies say

it has done little to ease the plight of children under five, who are underfed and underweight and that the amount of oil sold for food should be increased.

Earlier this week Iraq announced it was reducing rations of baby milk, cooking oil and other essentials, saying it had not received sufficient supplies under its oil deal with the United Nations and blaming Washington for the shortfall.

The US on Monday blasted Iraq for cutting food rations to its peo-

ple and accused Baghdad of holding up UN approval of \$120 million in food contracts.

State Department deputy spokesman James Foley called the cutbacks "really appalling and indeed tragic." He accused Baghdad of "claiming on the one hand to be concerned about the humanitarian plight of their own people, and yet, on the other hand to consistently thwart the efforts of the international community to meet those humanitarian needs."

As an example, he said the United

States signaled its "eagerness to consider and recommend for approval contracts for food worth nearly \$120 million" that are now with the UN Sanctions Committee secretariat.

But Foley said "Iraq has taken really the outrageous step of requesting that these contracts not be distributed to the Sanctions Committee for consideration." He said he did not know why Baghdad had acted this way.

"It is appalling that Iraq would delay consideration of contracts

for humanitarian goods that are in critically short supply while at the same time alleging that the United States is not sensitive to the suffering of the Iraqi people," Foley said.

The spokesman insisted the United States is "doing everything possible to alleviate suffering in Iraq while Saddam Hussein continues to increase and then use this suffering for political purposes."

Foodstuffs are in short supply in Iraq since UN trade sanctions imposed on Baghdad for invading Kuwait in 1990 blocked oil exports, its main source of foreign currency.



Prisoners occupy a tower at the Sorocaba Prison, 80 kilometers from Sao Paulo, where some 15 inmates are holding more than 600 people hostage. (AP)

## Brazil inmates hold 600 hostages

SAO PAULO, Brazil (Reuters) — A group of heavily armed prison inmates demanding more weapons and an armored car held more than 600 people hostage on Monday, Brazilian prison authorities said.

About 15 inmates who took control of the prison on Sunday released two women, wives of the inmates, who complained of feeling ill, officials said.

Television news said up to 20 hostages were released, but the reports could not be confirmed. Authorities initially reported the inmates had taken 450 people hostage.

Hostages at Sorocaba detention center, 80 kilometers from Sao Paulo, include about 300 women and 200 children — visiting relatives

of inmates — officials said. Another 20 hostages are prison staff.

Officials outside the prison said there were no talks to secure the release of hostage children because negotiations in general had reached a stalemate. They did not indicate what their next step would be.

"I am afraid to leave for fear the police may storm in," one of the hostages, a wife of an inmate, told O Globo television.

The atmosphere in the prison did not appear particularly tense, with television showing children and adults playing soccer inside the prison walls.

The inmates, who failed to escape from the prison on Sunday dressed in wigs and women's

clothing, were now demanding an armored car to flee from the overcrowded prison.

Television reports said the police were not ready to give them a vehicle.

Officials said they worried the food supply may run out at the prison, which was built to hold 650 inmates but houses about 850.

Sunday's riot began when a group of inmates tried to sneak out of the prison during a family visit. The plan failed and ended in a shootout that left one prisoner and a visiting relative dead.

During the riot, prisoners overpowered about 20 guards and took their weapons. The inmates then took some 600 visiting family members hostage.

## US urges congressman not to visit Teheran

By CAROL GIACOMO

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — The State Department on Monday said a US congressman was considering a trip to Iran but urged against the visit, saying any dialogue between the two hostile states should involve authorized government officials and be publicly acknowledged.

Deputy spokesman James Foley said Rep. Tom Lantos, a California Democrat and senior member of the House International Relations Committee, was in touch with the State Department and White House to discuss a possible trip to Iran.

"He has expressed an interest in visiting Iran but let me emphasize, should he actually be traveling to Iran, it would not be at the request of the White House or the State Department," Foley told reporters.

"It is not something that we encourage...It's something that we would discourage," he insisted.

Foley stressed that Washington wants an "official dialogue...between our two governments [that is an] authorized dialogue and one that would be acknowledged publicly with the Iranian authorities. We have not yet seen definitive indication on the part of the Iranians that they're prepared for such a dialogue."

US officials said they believed Lantos wanted to make the trip but would be under increased pressure not to go forward because of the State Department's public admonition.

They said key US policymakers are loathe to repeat what they consider a disastrous overture to Teheran a decade ago when the White House secretly sold arms to Iran and diverted the proceeds to the Nicaraguan contra rebels.

It is unclear who might invite Lantos to Iran and there is concern his trip could become embroiled in Iranian politics, the officials said.

Foley said the State Department had "informal contacts" with Lantos about a possible trip and would discuss Iran issues further with him, as it would with any congressman.

A Lantos spokesman in Washington said the congressman was in his California district Monday but he had nothing on Lantos's travel plans. US officials said they understood Lantos had not yet received an Iranian visa.

Earlier, a White House spokesman, Eric Rubin, said President Bill Clinton has no plans to send a special envoy to Teheran. He said a reported visit by Lantos was "news to us."

The official news agency of the United Arab Emirates quoted informed sources as saying Clinton sent Lantos to look into possible changes in Iranian foreign policy.

Although unusual, it is not out of the question for Americans with official or semi-official stature to undertake foreign trips without the formal okay of the White House in pursuit of sensitive and risky diplomatic missions.

The talk of a Lantos trip comes at a time of tantalizing signs of a possible thaw in relations between

Washington and Teheran after nearly two decades of bitter hostility.

Rubin said the United States was looking for "deeds not words" to Iran and diverted the proceeds to the Nicaraguan contra rebels.

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## UK reporter claims minister's son sold her drugs

LONDON (Reuters) — Police arrested a journalist on Monday who says she bought cannabis from the son of a British cabinet minister, prompting an angry protest from her editor.

The *Mirror* newspaper said its reporter Dawn Alford was arrested on suspicion of possessing cannabis when she went voluntarily to a London police station with another *Mirror* staffer and a lawyer. She was released on bail.

"This is an outrageous decision which is, in my opinion, specifically designed to deflect attention from the criminal activities of a cabinet minister's son to the entirely justifiable methods deployed by a newspaper to

uncover them," *Mirror* editor Piers Morgan said in a statement.

The *Mirror* reported last Wednesday that Alford had bought a small quantity of cannabis from the minister's 17-year-old son at a London pub following a tip-off.

Before publishing the story, the newspaper told the minister, who confronted the son and went with him to a police station where he was arrested and released on bail last Monday.

The son is too young to be named in print as facing a possible criminal charge, a law which also prevents the media from naming the father.

The story caused acute embarrassment for Prime Minister Tony

Blair's Labour government, which takes a hard line on drugs and has attacked as irresponsible a campaign by *The Independent* on Sunday newspaper to have cannabis legalized.

A spokesman for Blair, however, emphatically ruled out the minister's having to resign over the incident.

Alford said she went to the pub after a tip-off and paid 10 pounds (\$17) for a small packet of cannabis resin.

Morgan, describing the situation as farcical, said the decision to

arrest the reporter "has clearly been taken because of the sensitive position held by the cabinet minister and is an affront to investigative journalism."

Prosecutors must now decide if the minister's son will face charges. British law lays down a maximum sentence of 14 years in jail for supplying only cannabis, but offenders are normally fined if the quantity is small.

People arrested for possessing small quantities of the drug are often cautioned rather than charged.

NEW YORK (AP) — The upper floors of a six-story building in Times Square collapsed early yesterday, raining large pieces of concrete on an area that is jammed with people during the daytime.

No one was injured in the collapse, which happened at about 5:20 a.m. The building, the Selwyn Office Tower, was largely vacant and slated for demolition.

Slabs of brown concrete, some 3 to 4.5 meters long, landed on the sidewalk and street.

"If this was midnight on January 1, there would have been a lot of people who would have gotten hurt," said Eugene McMahon, a spokesman for the city's Department of Environmental Protection.

The New 42nd Street, a group working to rejuvenate the once-sleazy area, holds a lease on the 71-year-old building, which is adjacent to the construction site for a planned 18,600-square-meter retail and entertainment complex.

The building was storing supplies for this week's

New Year's Eve celebration, including 30,000 balloons and 20,000 leis, and artifacts from the "old" Times Square such as pinball machines and neon signs advertising sex shops.

"Next door, they had dug a huge hole for construction and between the construction and all the heavy rain, this must have happened," said Cora Cahan, The New 42nd Street group's president, referring to a storm that swept over the city Monday and early yesterday.

The collapse, which forced the closing of busy 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues, is the second construction mishap to disrupt midtown traffic this month. A crumbling facade on a 27-year-old building under repair on Madison Avenue and 55th Street rained bricks on the street below on December 7. Two pedestrians suffered minor injuries and businesses were forced to close during the busy holiday season.

## Building collapses in Times Square; no injuries

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# Shouldn't you be in bed now?

### A mid-size town's attempt to confront juvenile delinquency by imposing a curfew on teenagers stirs controversy in and beyond Poland

By MARY WILLIAMS WALSH

RADOM, Poland - Until this year, the worst case of lawlessness in memory in this city of 230,000 occurred about 20 years ago, when factory workers rioted after a rise in meat prices. Police were encouraged to smash heads and, by sun-up the next morning, four laborers lay dead in the streets and 2,000 had been jailed.

Aside from that brutal episode, Radom has long been a quiet, unexceptional, mid-size Polish city, known not for seething slums or a soaring crime rate but for its humming tanneries and Kalashnikov assault-rifle factory. Certainly, it would have occurred to very few here that the local teenagers constituted a menace to the common weal.

Lately, though, Radom has attracted the attention of European human rights groups and become a topic of national debate. Does the city represent an enlightened example in the battle to save Poland's wayward youth? Or is its crime-fighting method of choice - a curfew - a vestige of the police state, a sign that post-Communist officials here remain all too willing to uncut the police, even when no one has committed a crime?

"I've worked here for 20 years, and I can remember only one case where one teenager killed another," says Hieronim Glaz, the supervisor of the local juvenile lockup, where police can stash troublesome minors for 48 hours. "At that time, we thought

it was totally out of this world." Last New Year's Eve, however, the people of Radom were shocked when one high school student beat another to death in a barroom brawl. And then, in March, the unthinkable happened again: Two teenagers strangled a 14-year-old boy with an electric cord because they coveted his stylish Adidas gym shoes and sweatshirt.

Finally, in April, when a 16-year-old fatally bludgeoned his middle-aged neighbor after the neighbor accused him of vandalizing a doorbell, Radom swung into action.

Now the city police are supposed to demand identification from any young person they find on the streets between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. Those under 18 may be taken to Glaz's makeshift jail and booked. The cops then pass the information to the town youth advocate, who rings up the kids' parents and invites them to his office for tea and consultations.

Just so much wrist-slapping, one might think, given the rough stuff the youth of Radom seem to go in for these days. And with cities across America experimenting with curfews of their own, one wouldn't think a nighttime clampdown in Radom would be the stuff that human rights advocates' nightmares are made of.

But this is Poland, a former Eastern Bloc country where civil

liberties arrived only after 40 years of assembly-line Communist repression. Until recently, having your name entered in a police ledger here could mean you'd be blacklisted, or even beaten up in a secret cell.

For Andrzej Rzeplinski, a founding member of the Helsinki Foundation - a respected research group that monitors the progress of human rights in Poland - the question of whether a curfew is justified is a no-brainer.

"It's a totalitarian way of thinking," he says.

But seated at a desk in his cramped, coal-heated office on a snowy morning in Radom, Wlodzimirz Wolski does not look like much of a totalitarian thought policeman from the bad old days. A gym teacher in Communist times, Wolski is now Radom's youth advocate, charged in the new democratic order with safeguarding the rights of minors in his city.

It was Wolski who came up with the curfew idea - and he did so, he says, because after the unprecedented series of killings, frightened young people and their parents lined up to beg for help. They wanted to feel safe again.

Wolski simply couldn't believe it when some Polish newspapers covered his save-the-children program with headlines such as "Martial law in Radom," along

with scary photos of burly cops in dark jackets.

"In Poland, words like 'martial law' and 'curfew' cause fury in people," he says. "People don't associate them with anything good. Now the kids in Radom think somebody is trying to hurt them." And hurting people, says Wolski, is the last thing he wants to do.

When the parents of late-night wanderers come to his office, he says, he watches closely for signs of drinking, spousal abuse or other domestic unpleasantness that might be driving the children into the streets.

The purpose, he says, is to get alcoholic parents into treatment, to reach out to battered wives, even to offer cash assistance and help people find jobs.

Until the civil libertarians jumped in, Wolski had become something of a minor national hero, basking in the attention of mayors and youth agencies from one side of Poland to the other. Dozens of officials had contacted his office, he says, to ask how they too could impose curfews and clear their streets of the unruly young. In Warsaw, specialists began studying ways to implement a national version. Polls showed that more than 90 percent of respondents liked the idea.

Wolski, meanwhile, could proudly rattle off police statistics

suggesting that his city has, in fact, sharply reduced youth crime. "Until now, the police stopped teenagers only if they had done something really bad, like drinking alcohol or breaking into a car," he says. "Now every underage person on the street at night is seen as a threat and is asked what they are doing."

It's precisely this line of thinking - every teenager a threat - that has set alarm bells ringing at the Helsinki Foundation, whose intellectuals and scholars worked bravely from the underground during the Polish martial-law years to document and publicize all manner of abuse that took place in the name of law enforcement.

The Polish law does not allow detentions of people by group," says the foundation's Rzeplinski. "You cannot detain all teenagers, any more than you can detain all Jews, all bald people or all cyclists." Although the Helsinki Foundation says it hasn't received any formal complaints from young people in Radom, it has offered to file suit at the European Court of Justice on behalf of any Radom minor who wants to challenge his or her detention. It also has urged Wolski to come in and discuss ways to make his curfew compatible with human rights, but Wolski refuses to make such an appointment. (LA Times)



## South of the border

A North Korean defector holds her baby while hugging a family member in Seoul yesterday. The South Korean National Security Planning Agency showed off to the press nine North Koreans who defected to the South in August. (AP)

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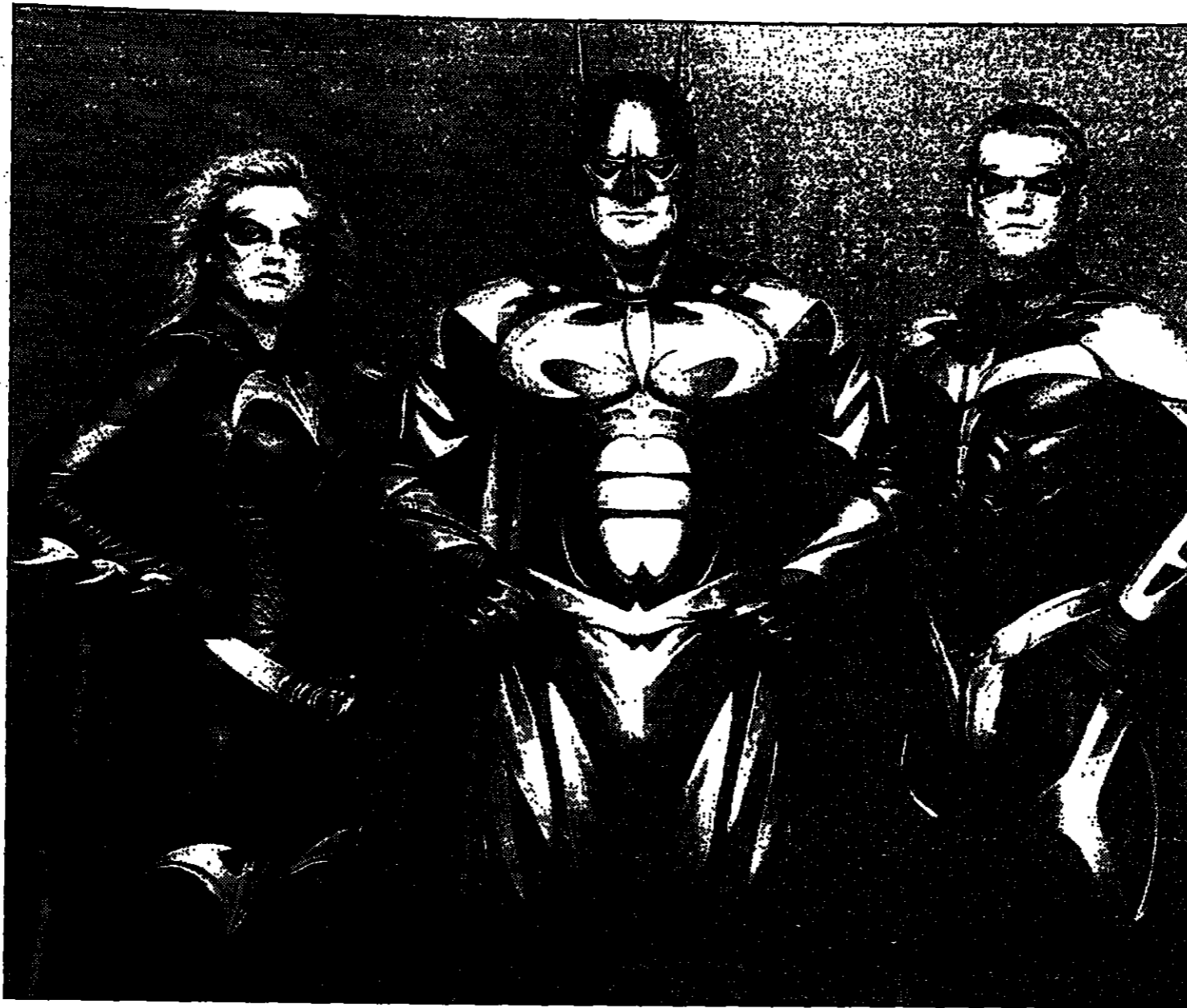
# Must-miss movies of 1997

How could anybody possibly trim the worst movies of the year - for true connoisseurs of cinematic trash, a really vintage year - to only 10 mealy movies?

Only by tossing out the inept, underbudgeted and ill-conceived and focusing on the people who seem to do it on purpose. In keeping with the inflated self-importance of so many voting entities, we'd like to bestow a special Lifetime Achievement Award on Chevy Chase, without whom bad movies would have no guiding intelligence (or lack thereof).

1. *G.I. Jane* - As Richard Nixon once said, you can only be insulted by someone you respect, so it's tough to be too worked up over this Demi-debacle.
2. *Con Air* - No one in this star-studded blow-'em-up seemed to be taking it seriously, which was smart. Memo to Nick-Cage: No more angry hunks without a solid underlying neurosis.
3. *Excess Baggage* - No offense to the unfranchised but sometimes, when you give a teenager like Alicia Silverstone "artistic control," this is the kind of thing that can happen.
4. *Batman and Robin* - A mess.
5. *Money Talks* - Relentless.
6. *The Saint* - No one knew what was going on, or cared.
7. *The Pest* - John Leguizamo without a leash.
8. *Meer Wally Sparks* - Rodney Dangerfield without a golf bag.
9. *The Fifth Element* - Overdressed, underwritten opportunity for Bruce Willis to smirk for two hours.
10. *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* - Spielberg's dinosaur wrecks: Did you see it? Did you think about it for more than five minutes? It felt longer than the Jurassic Era itself.

(The Washington Post)



Alicia Silverstone (above as Batgirl, with Batman [George Clooney] and Robin [Chris O'Donnell]) starred in two of the 10 worst films.

# Hanukka, Hollywood style

By TOM TUGEND

On the sixth night of the Festival of Lights, Roseanne (a.k.a. Roseanne Barr) put on a Hanukkah play - and the tale of the brave Maccabees and the miraculous cruse of oil may never be the same again.

In the one-time matinee and evening performances, the director, narrator and author, listed as Roseanne Thomas on the program, mixed show-biz shtick with the traditional themes to hugely entertain parents and a raft of noisy kids in the small auditorium of the Kabbalah Learning Center in Hollywood.

Sitting in the second row on a hard folding chair and taking it all in was modestly dressed Madonna and her year-old daughter Lourdes, with not a single paparazzo within miles.

The large cast represented almost the entire four-to-seven-year old student body of the Kabbalah Day School.

Referring to her young cast, Roseanne proudly noted that "this is the first time in history that children are being taught Kabbala," while the program boasted that the day school "is the only school in the history of Judaism that offers a full curriculum of Torah studies combined with an emphasis on kabbalistic teachings, along with an extensive secular program."

The rotund television star admitted that the Hanukkah play made for "the most nerve-racking day of my career. It's one thing to make the network mad, but to make God mad..." Amidst more traditional scenes, the director-narrator spiced up the play with some innovations of her own.

In forcing a pious Jew to worship idols, a Hellenizer holds up an Oscar statuette, while the victim

inquires if his apostasy will at least get him into Disneyland.

Interjects Roseanne, "Today, many Jews still worship this idol." The climactic battle between the Maccabees and the Seleucids is shown via video on a wide TV screen, with Antiochus's forces aided by hordes of Scottish Highlanders, led by Mel Gibson, courtesy of the film *Braveheart*.

Roseanne appears in the video as a reporter for TV station KNN, describing the progress of the battle. As Mattathias dies, she urges the audience to stay tuned.

In a swinging scene, depicting the desecration of the Temple, a five-year-old cocktail waitress fills an order for "one Manischewitz straight up," while a line of similarly aged disco dancers strut their stuff.

Despite this comedic approach to Hanukka, Roseanne takes her involvement with the Kabbalah Learning Center seriously. She spent over two months researching and rehearsing the play, and she has attended classes at the center for more than three years.

On her way out of the hall, she told an inquirer that "everything I believe in has come from Kabbala," whose study has raised her to "a higher consciousness."

The center has been sharply criticized by mainstream rabbis for teaching a superficial pop version of Kabbala, while a number of disenchanted former members have complained of high-pressure tactics to give more money.

None of this has lessened the center's appeal to Hollywood figures in search of spiritual solace and understanding. Besides Madonna and Roseanne, reported disciples include Barbra Streisand, Elizabeth Taylor, Courtney Love, Jeff Goldblum and Laura Dern.

# Prime minister's award for 'provocative' composer

By MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Some might deem Tzippi Fleischer too offbeat to be considered for the Prime Minister's Composer Award, which she will receive in a ceremony tomorrow evening, together with two other composers, Menahem Wiesenberg and Oded Assaf. But those who decided to award to prize to Fleischer (jury members this year were Mira Zakai, Itai Talgam and Ynam Leef) have done a great service to music in general, and Israeli music in particular, by choosing Fleischer.

One of the more intriguing, nonconventional, and provocative composers of our age, Fleischer is more avant garde than others yet at the same time writes simple melodies which can reach directly to your heart.

When she was 25, Fleischer, a graduate of the Oriental Studies division at the Reali School in Haifa, obtained university degrees in both Arabic and composition. The only way to combine her interests in Arabic and musicology was to set Arab poetry to music. Which was exactly what she did. And several years ago Fleischer's major works in this mode were recorded by the Koch Schwann label in a disc that opens with the composer's own invocation, in fluent and dramatic Arabic, of her



Eskimos, Beduin, and Gypsies influenced Tzippi Fleischer.

love of the language.

Fleischer moves from one genre to another, always keeping her very personal musical style, in which vocals, whether narration or singing in a variety of languages, closely accompany the musical line.

Fleischer created a series of multimedia works titled "The Ethnic World," involving "sophisticated studio-processed magnetic tapes of fascinating sounds scopes which I came upon in recent years in various locations of the globe, such as among the Eskimos, Beduin, and Gypsies."

Other creations are "avant-garde

multimedia works for performance on the stage which contain phonetic simulations of ancient dead languages from the Semitic East." Some of these works have been performed on stage, others were recorded on video, and then last summer Fleischer presented her first real opera, *Medea*, a culmination of her ongoing search for the perfect combination of music and drama.

Fleischer is an active composer and educator. She teaches music in several colleges and is very proud of that. "I believe education is a very important part of our life," she says, adding that in recent years she seems to be traveling extensively all over the world. "I really do not know how it all started. In 1986 I had my first LP out and suddenly I began traveling with my music. Now my works are performed regularly all over the world."

Israelis do not have many opportunities to hear Fleischer's music. Her discs are not easily found in your neighborhood record store, and since performances of her works involve many musicians and unconventional instruments, live concerts are difficult to organize.

The music of Tzippi Fleischer is imbued with a very Israeli sensibility, a special combination of musical and dramatic elements by a composer who never ceases searching for new and uncommon musical languages.

# A prize for a puppet master

By HELEN KAYE

Mario Kotliar presides over an empire. He's the director-general of the Interdisciplinary Theater Association of Jerusalem (ITAJ). It comprises the Train Puppet Theater (est. 1981), the School of Visual Theater (1986), the Habama Theater (1989), the Phenomena Festival (1996) and now *Code*, a new interdisciplinary arts magazine.

All had their genesis from him, and tomorrow night Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert will present him with the municipality's Life Achievement Award for Culture.

Kotliar's very unimperial office is on the fourth floor of a concrete pile in the Talpiot industrial area of Jerusalem which houses both the school and the theater. There's just room for a desk, a couple of chairs and two sad-looking bookcases half filled with files.

Kotliar is a tall, soft-spoken, gentle-tempered, utterly unpretentious man whose relaxed manner belies the energy that drives him through his usual 12-hour day. He speaks in the first-person plural, not a royal "we," but in deference to the long-time colleagues and associates who work with him.

He also speaks of himself as a facilitator rather than an organizer, saying "I regard everything I do, even my work in management, as part of my art." A pause. "That's why I have a comptroller to take

care of the money end!"

It all started in a Buenos Aires attic filled with the kind of junk that beckons children to play Let's Pretend. Kotliar spent hours there.

He was born in 1949, the only boy among four sisters. His father was a radio host who died when Kotliar was 11. His mother took care of the family "and I inherited a love of books from her. Her father was a miser and wouldn't allow the children to read in bed, so Mother read books by candlelight. She still loves to read."

A committed and active Zionist, young Kotliar first arrived in Israel for a summer youth counselor's course in the middle of the Six Day War. Then he went back to Buenos Aires. Three years and a degree in theater later, he immigrated to Kibbutz Alumot, but his stay there was brief. Kibbutz life, Kotliar decided, was not for him. "But I think that everything we've done in the association contains something of what should have happened in the kibbutz, but didn't. I mean the conception that respects individuality as part of giving to the whole, of giving people their space."

He came to Jerusalem, where he still lives with his wife and two children, and there met up with the people who are still part of ITAJ, like Hadass Ophrat, co-founder with him of the School of Visual Theater, or Alina Ashpel who runs the Train.

"We all had theater groups," he

recalls, "and what united us was that none of us wanted to do conventional theater. Everything we have done was born from the group. This was the '70s, and our heroes were [avant-garde theater director] Robert Wilson, the [social activist] Bread and Puppet Theater, and [director] Richard Foreman."

Puppet theater was the first choice because Ophrat had experience in the genre and "because a puppet is a metaphor on two levels - the human and the symbolic. The puppet is also an object, raw material that can be manipulated."

"From there, the road to the school [of visual theater] was very short. Content is more than just words. The visual world has significance that extends horizons, so everything becomes possible. Besides, we felt that Jerusalem needed and wanted the school."

With the establishment of the school in 1986, "Habama became inevitable so that theory could become practice." Its productions made waves locally and at festivals abroad, like Ophrat's *Behind the Fence* or Kotliar's own *Babylonian Tales*. More recently it has sheltered its graduates' work, like that of video and theater artist Anat Ben-David.

Kotliar's local directing career started in 1973 with Michel de Gelderde's *Escorial* and continued unabated over the years until *Don't Kill Don Quixote* last year,

the year he got the Golden Mermaid at the Chervia Festival, Italy, for his contribution to the furtherance of visual theater. Until 1990, he taught play analysis and theater theory at the school.

Festivals are part and parcel of Kotliar's inclusive artistic vision of total theater. He started with the International Puppet Festival in 1982, the year after he established the Train, not only to raise local consciousness and standards towards puppetry but to open local audiences to the idea that puppet theater is for adults as well as for kids. Last year puppets were incorporated into Phenomena, a well-received festival that ran the gamut from puppets to performance art.

He calls total theater that "in which everything is connected, that leads the spectator into a world of total illusion. I don't like contemporary quotes, or polemics. That's why I look for universal material that has a poetic core and which can absorb experimentation with form."

Kotliar's artistic start-ups have always taken hold, and if they haven't exactly become household names, they are still there "because I have the talent to see the opportunity and seize the moment, I suppose," he muses. And because "I still feel like a foreigner here. I'm not part of the theater establishment, so everything I create is a statement of being."

# A fabulous foursome

Early music is a way of thinking about art more than anything else. Some might call a performance of Wagner or Schumann by specialized early music, while others will even deem Bach late music. Early music has to do with how a certain piece of music is performed and with what instruments it is performed.

When singing is involved, we enter into a totally different realm because there is no way of knowing how the singers of the first part of this millennium actually sounded. But ample information exists to give a sense of the style, which is what many ensembles try to convey.

Since the emergence of Early Music as a style more than three decades ago, many ensembles have formed and have begun to perform and record around the world. The wealth is immense, the riches of the repertoire are unfathomable, but not many ensembles have managed to make their mark on the market.

One exception is Anonymous 4, a female foursome that has performed to great international acclaim since its inauguration in 1986.

They already have six discs to their credit, each of which is a pure delight. And now comes the

## CLASSIC DISCS

By Michael Ajzenstadt

seventh, Hildegard von Bingen's *1,000 Virgins, Chants for the Feast of St. Ursula*, Anonymous 4 (Harmonia Mundi 907200), which is magical.

The combination of Anonymous 4 and Von Bingen is an excellent one. On the one hand are four female musicians of this day and age who are devoted to the music of 1,000 years ago. On the other hand is probably the first serious female composer of the Western world whose music is pure and refined. The meeting ground has to do with a third woman, St. Ursula, and the legend of her martyrdom with her 1,000 or more virgin companions during her trip from Rome back to her homeland.

The story itself is first-rate material for dramatic presentation, but Von Bingen does not tell us the story of the saint. Rather, she created 18 relatively short (ranging from less than a minute to nine minutes long) segments which were intended as prayers during the Feast of St. Ursula.

Critics, musicologists, musicians and music lovers have been searching for new adjectives to praise the musicianship and sheer

musical joy and vivacity of Anonymous 4 and justifiably so. The special blend of these four women is amazing. When they sing, they virtually transport you to bygone times. Their music floats in the air in all its beauty and elan and makes you feel as if you were part of a mystical experience that is centuries old. They don't sound like a modern ensemble imitating long-forgotten traditions. In fact, they sound so pure, one imagines the music-making of the 11th and 12th centuries.

Von Bingen has been a favorite composer of many early music or, should one say, medieval music ensembles. Her music is powerful and dramatic while at the same time soothing, caressing and evocative in its refined, tender beauty.

The combination of Anonymous 4 - the fabulous Ruth Cunningham, Marsha Genesky, Susan Hellauer and Johanna Maria Rose - with the music of Hildegard von Bingen results in one of the most sensitive, polished and warm-hearted discs of the year. It is a unique opportunity to savor the music of a millennium ago with 20th-century sense and sensibility in a mode that is very remote from this day and age.

And speaking of days and ages, isn't it time to invite this fabulous foursome to perform in Israel?

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## Religious bridges to peace

Police last week arrested right-wing extremist Avigdor Eskin — infamous for numerous publicity stunts such as placing a curse on Yitzhak Rabin before his assassination — for participating in an alleged plot to desecrate the Temple Mount with a pig's head. According to his lawyer, Eskin denied his involvement, claiming that he, too, thought that such a provocation would be a "stupid" idea.

Appropriately, Sephardi Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron sent a letter Sunday to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat strongly condemning the alleged plot. The Bakshi-Doron letter continues a welcome and promising trend, that of Israeli religious leaders reaching out to both their counterparts and to political leaders in the Arab world. Other examples include an exchange of letters between Bakshi-Doron and Sheikh Tantawi of al-Azhar University in Cairo, and Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Israel Lau's recent visit to Egypt as a guest of President Hosni Mubarak.

The mission of the rabbis is as straightforward as it is urgent: to enlist Moslem clerics in condemning the taking of innocent life in the strongest terms. After meeting with Rabbi Lau, Sheikh Tantawi did make such a statement, saying that all people of status within Islam condemn terrorism, and that "Islamic sharia [law] opposes any harm to innocents." Aside from such a positive statement, there may be a long way to ridding the region of the scourge of terrorism, whether it be suicide bombings within Israel or the recent massacre of tourists in Egypt. Even the most authoritative defense of the true values of Islam or Judaism cannot prevent extremists on either side from distorting religion for their political purposes, as did the assassin of Yitzhak Rabin.

Still, it is critical that such statements be made and repeated as loudly, widely, and at as many levels as possible — not just for the sake of peace and security, but to defend religion itself. Religious leaders are normally thought of as standing in the breach against the depredations of secularism, but fanatics who kill innocents in the name of God are at least as great a threat to religion's bid for popular allegiance in a modern world. In fact, it is the commonalities between Islamic and Jewish leaders that hold the potential for producing a productive dialogue. Both

are threatened by secularism and by fanaticism. And both may be uniquely positioned to moderate the other.

In Israel, the religious-nationalist opposition to the peace process is not just fueled by doctrinal allegiance to the land, but by the same security concerns that are shared by all Israelis. Most Israelis believe that Islam does not recognize any foreign sovereignty, and that "peace" is synonymous with the extension of Islamic law. But within Islam, there is also the concept of "hudna," which provides for coexistence with foreign powers which cannot be conquered. In other words, Islam, like Judaism, has ways of accommodating to realities that are less than ideal from its perspective. Understandably, many Israelis might regard a status of conditional tolerance as less than acceptable. Regardless of theology, however, any peace with the Arab world will have to be built upon a foundation of military deterrence.

On the other hand, the dialogue with religious leaders could also have a moderating impact by dispelling myths about Judaism and Islam. Though practically all Israelis are horrified and disgusted by the idea of desecrating a mosque as deliberate provocation, we cannot assume that the Moslem world understands this. At the Islamic conference in Teheran, Arafat himself was not above making the ridiculous charge that Israel was plotting to dismantle the Islamic holy places on the Temple Mount. Such religious incitement must be condemned and combated by both political and religious leaders.

In addition to dispelling misunderstandings of Judaism, rabbis can find common ground with their Moslem counterparts over the challenges of secularism. Though part of the Islamic religious opposition to the peace process is theological, part is an identification of peace with the spread of Western secular culture. In a situation in which Islamic religious movements fear being left out of deals between secular governments, Jewish religious leaders could be the most effective emissaries in convincing them that their role will be enhanced later if they are part of the process now. The government should encourage the trend towards inter-religious diplomacy by signaling that it will treat with seriousness any agreement that results.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**MISUNDERSTANDING TURKEY**

Sir, - It was with great disappointment that I read the editorial "Turkey fails to shape up" (December 14).

Israel, above all, should be sensitive to the dilemma that Turkey is facing in the court of public opinion. Israel has been the victim of false allegations and media hype throughout the intifada. This is similar to the situation that Turkey is currently facing in its efforts to defeat the terrorist PKK.

There is no question that there are real problems with the way Turkey has handled its Kurdish minority. But, with whom does the *Jerusalem Post* wish to compare the Turkish behavior when it uses

the words "beneath contempt"? Turkey is engaged in two historical experiments for which it should receive credit. One is the courageous and defiant forging of a relationship with the State of Israel. The other experiment is Turkey's determination to support a secular democracy in a region where it is sorely lacking.

Recently, on December 9, the Turkish ambassador, voting on a draft resolution at the UN on the "Syrian Golan," stated the following: "There are several reasons for the current impasse faced in the peace efforts. We do not think it is fair to assign all responsibility on one of the elements or one of the

countries involved. We need to deal with each of the factors contributing to the existing situation."

At the Islamic Conference, held recently in Teheran, Turkey took a beating because it would not waiver in its relationship with Israel, and President Demirel walked out of the conference.

The Turkish statement adequately describes the position that the *Post* should have taken.

THOMAS NEUMANN  
 Executive Director  
 Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs  
 Washington, D.C.

**HORSEBACK RIDING CURRICULUM**

Sir, - In your feature "Health Scan" of December 7, your reporter states that an educational psychologist by the name of Shai Roditi, after conducting tests recently, has concluded that horseback riding improves the skills of learning-impaired children.

This is very true but not new at all. My dyslexic grandson, who is now almost 20, attended a special (in more than one sense) school on Kibbutz Givat Haim, where horseback riding was an important part of the curriculum. Together with the rest of the successful teaching

methods, it changed him from a frustrated youngster into a well adjusted adult with many incredible talents, who can read as well as anybody, in Hebrew as well as in English.

I also would like to add that not all learning-impaired children suffer from disruptive behavior, which could be deduced from the article. I know that none of my three dyslexic descendants ever did.

CLAIRE LEEFSMA  
 Yokne'am Illit

**PA COVENANT**

Sir, - The PA has all it needs and is very busy. Its VIPs roam freely in our country. The fight against terror is reported daily. But not a word about the Covenant. Is it dead? Is there a Palestinian National Council? If so, where? I am afraid once the government has reached final status with the PA, it will belatedly remember that it forgot to ask about the Covenant and its threat against the existence of Israel.

REBECCA BEHAGEN  
 Jerusalem

## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 years ago: On December 31, 1947, *The Palestine Post* reported that 2,000 Arabs, enraged by the killing of six Arabs in a bomb explosion near the main gate of the Consolidated Refineries on the Haifa-Acre road, ran amok, massacring 39 Jewish workmen and wounding another seven. Before the eyes of British officials, Jewish workers were beaten to death with axes, lengths of iron and other metal tools. The 50 Jewish office workers were refused permission by their British superiors to go to their colleagues' rescue and were locked inside the building.

Bodies of the killed were stripped of valuables and identity documents. Only after an hour and a half of murderous rioting troops appeared and brought the situation under control.

In Jerusalem the Hagana felled Arab attacks on Kiryat Moshe and Beit Hakarem. The Arabs withdrew suffering a number of casual-

ties. Raking fire from A-Tur village killed a British Police escort and a Jew attending a funeral on the Mount of Olives. Members of the Arab "National Guard" robbed and murdered Herman Ringle, 35, who was walking near the Mamilla Road. Filled with Hadassah hospital workers, a No. 9 bus on its way to Mt. Scopus was attacked in the morning. Fourteen passengers and the driver were killed and another seriously injured in Rehov Agrippas. Two Jews were later seriously injured by a grenade thrown at the same spot.

A 19-year-old boy was killed and six other Jews injured in sniping along the Tel Aviv-Jaffa border. Two Jews were killed in renewed acts of violence in Safed. The chairman of the Bat Yam Local Council urged the authorities to remove British armored cars from his township accusing them

of opening fire on the passers-by.

25 years ago: On December 31, 1972, *The Jerusalem Post* reported the full story of the Bangkok Israeli Embassy drama where six Israeli hostages were taken and the four terrorists who had released them were facing a "trial" by Black September in Cairo.

Israel's Ambassador Rehavam Amir lauded the Egyptian Ambassador Mustafa el-Essawy for having negotiated the settlement. Israel took further steps to tighten the already stringent security precautions abroad.

The Ministry of Social Welfare was blamed by Haifa's Juvenile Court Judge, Aharon Melamed, for the "deteriorating state of affairs" in the treatment of juvenile offenders in Israel.

Two more Jews had been remanded as suspects in an alleged Syrian spy and sabotage ring.

Alexander Zvielli



## Leumi breaks the banks

The most absurd, surreal and generally superfluous issue that the Israeli banking system has been wrestling with over the last few years concerns the move to a five-day workweek.

Most of the business sector in Israel has, over the last decade or more, adopted a five-day workweek, whereby Friday is no longer a working day. This includes service sectors as well, but not the retail sector, for which Friday is an important business day on which many customers concentrate their shopping.

The question for the banking sector therefore, was whether it could move over to a five-day week, like other businesses, or whether bank branches should stay open, in line with other retail outlets. In practice, most banks have long since moved their head-office activities to a five-day week basis, so the issue centered on the branch network.

Nevertheless, a subsidiary question arose: if the banks adopt a five-day week, which should be the "off" day? Should it be Friday, because it's a half day and has become part of the weekend, or perhaps Sunday, because that's not a business day abroad and much of the business sector's banking activity is conducted in foreign currency, and therefore does not require the banks to be open on Sundays.

An alternative solution was mooted, whereby different departments of the banks would close on different days — some on Sunday and some on Friday.

The most amazing thing about this pseudo-issue is that it has rumbled on for five years, with the banks unable to agree among themselves on a timetable. The absurdity heightened when the Restrictive Business Practices Authority ordered the banks not to agree among themselves — this would be

**PINCHAS LANDAU**

Through its comic, five-year debate over the length of its workweek, the banking sector thought of everything except the customers' needs

branches open, in order to supply essential banking services to the public. The workers committees agreed (except that of Israel Discount, but that's a separate story), and D-Day was set for January 16, 1998.

However, last week Bank Leumi blew this supposedly happy state of affairs to smithereens. Leumi unilaterally announced that it had agreed with its workers committee to open all the branches on Fridays, while the employees would rotate their day off, some working Fridays and some Sundays.

In other words, the public would receive wider service, but the employees would go over to a five-

day workweek.

The reaction among the other banks was one of fury, and among the regulators of confusion and puzzlement. But one newspaper posed the obvious question: "Why didn't anybody think of this sooner?" This way, everybody comes out ahead, so why not do it?

The answer is, as it has been throughout this nonsensical debate, that the last thing that bank managements and employees considered was the needs of their customers. They were solely concerned with their relative positions, in terms of power, wages, costs, etc. The regulators, of course, were completely cut off from what the public wanted or needed, and focussed only on their bureaucratic turf battles and procedural matters.

However, the bottom line concerning bank branches is really very simple. They exist to serve the public, and nowadays the public wants longer and more convenient hours of access to retail services such as banking. It also wants electronic, telephone and other forms of banking services — but branches are still the staple of the bank-customer connection.

Leumi has shattered Israeli banking tradition by realizing that if it gives the customer what he or she wants, it will benefit, and its rivals will suffer. This is connected with the fact that competition in the retail sector now focuses on service, and Leumi has served notice that from now on the rules of the game will be changed to recognize this reality, which in most other retail sectors has long been obvious. The other banks can gnash their teeth and wail, but that won't help them if they don't adapt their practices — and their thinking — to meet the challenge Leumi has posed.

## Arafat's new maneuver

A great miracle occurred here. And also on Hanukka 50 years ago.

Had the UN succeeded in establishing an international force to implement its partition resolution, Israel would have remained without Jerusalem and western Galilee, without Jaffa, Lod, Ramle and without Acre. Israel would not have been able to absorb the millions of Jews who gathered here had the Arabs agreed to the international force and to partition. The hesitation of the UN to act against the Arab invasion of Israel led to a change of the map.

This week Arafat raised the very idea which the Arabs rejected 50 years ago, to station an international force between Israel and the Palestinians. On the surface, this seems like an innocent proposal for the enhancement of the security of Jews and Palestinians alike. In fact, it is a transparent attempt to counterbalance Israel's demand for the creation of security zones beyond the '67 borders. It is also a signal from Arafat that the Palestinian agreement to live in peace with Israel, as defined in the Oslo Accords, applies only to the shrunken borders of 1947, when there were only 600,000 Jews in the country.

It is highly doubtful that placing an international force in Israel would deter a war between Israel and its neighbors. Accumulated experience with the UN has taught that the presence of an international force does not prevent bloody conflicts. But it is not Israel at fault for the "spilled milk," nor is it because of Israel that the UN desisted in sending an international force to implement the partition resolution. The bloody riots which the Arabs instigated the day after the UN decision of November 29 were responsible, as was American repudiation at the Soviet proposal for superpower cooperation in manning the international force. Terrified of the "nightmare" of having Red Army soldiers in the Middle East, the Americans rejected Moscow's proposal hands down.

The demand for an international force constitutes part of a wider Arab diplomatic offensive. This drive is expressed in repeated attempts to include more and more countries as mediators in the conflict, in diametrical opposition to the Israeli doctrine of direct nego-

**MOSHE ZAK**

Dragging more states into the conflict by offering them a role in mediation and participation in an international force

ted, as it was in the UN. Israel opposed this idea, and stood firm on the principle of direct, bilateral negotiations.

Compromise on this issue was expressed in two channels: 1) After the Yom Kippur War, Israeli-Egypt negotiations were launched at the Geneva Conference in December 1972, but proceeded bilaterally, eventually culminating in then-president Anwar Sadat's visit to the Knesset in Jerusalem. 2) After the Gulf war and the failed intifada, negotiations were launched at the Madrid Conference in October 1991, but proceeded as direct bilateral talks in Washington. Indeed, in each instance, both parties requested the help of the United States on logistical matters, such as the convening at Camp David for the signing of the treaty with Egypt, and at the White House, for the signing of the Washington declaration with Jordan. But it was the direct meetings — such as that of then-foreign minister Moshe Dayan with Egyptian deputy premier Hassan Tohami in Morocco in 1977, and those of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin with King Hussein in Amman and in London — which led to the breakthroughs.

Israel was consistently opposed to widening the circle of countries, with the exception of the US, participating in the bilateral talks

and taking on the special services which included bearing the brunt of the enormous cost involved in the peace treaty. In his visit to Tel Aviv in January 1996, King Hussein justly boasted that the peace treaty was achieved without foreign intervention. The formulation of the Washington declaration between Israel and Jordan — signed on July 25, 1994 — was passed on to the US secretary of state only 16 hours prior to the signing on the White House lawn. Had the Americans taken part in formulating the declaration of principles between Israel and the PLO in Oslo, perhaps a fair amount of errors in the formulation would have been avoided. But the fact is that only after arriving at an agreement did Israel report to the US and request the latter's services for holding a signing ceremony at the White House.

The conclusion: a genuine agreement can only be reached after conducting direct, bilateral meetings between Israel and any Arab partner. Now Arafat is trying to drag more and more mediators into the negotiations that he is conducting with Israel. He understands that the crumbling of the Soviet empire has limited the Arabs' maneuvering capability. It is thus that he is trying to get the European Union, Russia, Norway and Egypt to pressure Israel and the US into agreeing to include them as mediators. None of these countries is concerned solely about peace in the region. Each has its own interests. The Europeans want to become part of an international apparatus supervising the implementation of the Oslo Accords, just as they were included in the monitoring committee in Lebanon. The Russians have special interests in Iran and Iraq. Egypt wants to retain its standing as the leader of the Arab world.

The interests of the countries trying to become involved in the mediation between Israel and the Palestinians are not identical. The only result liable to emerge is a competition for which of the countries will concede the most at Israel's expense. Israel, thus, must be wary of the many tempting offers of mediation. Peace will not come of them. Nor will peace and stability result from sending an international force as a surrogate to security zones vital to Israel's safety.

## Celebrate proudly

**ESTHER WACHSMAN**

Why celebrate the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel? It's a waste of money, the national mood does not warrant it, there's dissent, disagreement, resignations, an organizational mess in the planning of events, and so on.

Perhaps only those of us who came to this country from the different diasporas can really experience the joy and pride of the 50-year landmark of the establishment of the Jewish state, of the return to Zion, of what it felt like to arrive in Israel, to see all the signs in Hebrew, to hear the Hebrew language being spoken, to hear our radio and television broadcasters wishing us "Shabbat Shalom" and "Shavua Tov", "Chag Sameah" and Hatikva played at the end of the broadcast day.

Perhaps only those who lived as a minority group among gentiles, who imbibed a foreign culture, were inundated with Christmas carols for a few months a year, were the only family on the block without Christmas lights and trees, suffered looks of scorn by bus drivers when going to their Jewish schools between December 25 and January 1, and sometimes were even beaten up by some local thugs, can understand and appreciate life in the Jewish state, and not take it for granted.

During these days of Hanukka, let us not forget what happened 50 years ago, after one third of our people were burned in the ovens of Nazi Germany. After 2000 years of exile, the Zionist dream has come true. "When God returns us to Zion, we are as dreamers" has been fulfilled — and I, for one, am grateful to make my home in Jerusalem, and raise my children as proud, strong, believing Jews, for they — and most of our youth are wonderful, idealistic, bright and motivated children of vision and fulfillment.

The significance of Hanukka is the issue of a culture struggle. The struggle then was between Jews wishing to lead a life of Jewish values according to our heritage and those who wished to adopt foreign, Greek values. This struggle still exists, but Jewish values, traditions and beliefs have the upper hand. And so — yes — we have cause for celebration.

A great Zionist entity has arisen in 50 years — a very short period in the perspective of history. Absorption of immigrants from all corners of the earth, technological and scientific advances, educational, economic and social progress and indeed excellence, are a source of great wonder and pride.

Of course, there are problems and pitfalls. The blight of unemployment tears our hearts; the health issue must be solved, problems of national security and peace must be worked out. But let us look at the glass that is half filled. Complaining is a national characteristic and pastime, and has characterized the Jewish people from the dawn of our history.

The children of Israel complained in the wilderness, and continued to complain after teaching the promised land. It seems that our collective memory as a people dictates continued complaints and bemoaning. But instead of cursing the darkness, let us light a candle.

Deeds, and not words should be the order of the day. Our sages tell us that 50 years is the age of advice. We are all experts at giving advice; perhaps our sages meant that at this stage we should also attempt to be mature enough to receive and accept advice. How desperately we need good advice at this stage.

Let us show our admiration and gratitude to all those great people who contributed and are now contributing to the great reawakening and rebuilding that our generation has been privileged to be part of: the return to Zion, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the planting of our forests, the development of our towns and cities, the absorption of immigrants, the establishment of the finest yeshivot, the greatest hospitals, judicial system, enlightened democracy — the list is long. We have much to celebrate, much to be proud of and thankful for.

Together with our brothers in the Diaspora, we salute the State of Israel, we sing its praises, we love and cherish every centimeter of our land.

And we pray that the next 50 years be even more fruitful and promising, where every Jew will live in his homeland in peace, security, prosperity and joy. "Joyous is the man that such is his lot — joyous is the man that the Lord is his God."

The author's son Nahshon was killed by Hamas terrorists in October 1994.



# More working Moms than ever

## More than half of new mothers in America are going back to work before their babies are a year old, Faye Fiore reports

A sweeping study of American fertility habits has found more than half of new US mothers are going back to work before their infants can walk, a significant change from just a generation ago, the US Census Bureau says.

The study found that full-time, stay-at-home moms are no longer the majority in America, with 55 percent of new mothers returning to the labor force in 1995 within 12 months of giving birth. In 1976, when the Census Bureau first began to track the trend, the comparable figure was only 31%.

The older and more educated the mother, the more likely she is to return to work before her baby turns 1, with a scaring 77% of college-educated women 30 to 44 years old deciding to juggle motherhood and an outside job, the study showed.

"Here you have a group of women who postponed children, got an education, went to work after college and probably have been fairly successful moving up in terms of income and satisfaction. It's hard to walk away from that," said Suzanne Bianchi, professor of sociology at the University of Maryland.

While the figures do not indicate whether women are returning to their jobs full time, it does portray a nation of mothers who have spent the last 20 years deciding to go back to work in steadily increasing numbers before their babies toddle.

"These women are more likely to be in professional positions and probably have the ability to afford child care they are confident about. They don't want to lose their ability to move up. They also probably have more interesting

work and that draws them back," said Christine Winquist Nord, senior study director at Westat, a Washington, D.C., research organization that studies families.

The findings also reflect the increasing reliance of many American households on two paychecks, as well as the growing rate of single motherhood, experts noted.

The census report, "Fertility of American Women: June 1995," surveyed nearly 57,000 households across the United States and found the American birthrate in

mothers, they are assimilating to the culture exactly like native-born Americans," said Amara Bachu, the demographer who produced the report.

All told, the study reflected increases in an array of child-bearing choices, suggesting women are choosing varied paths to suit their lifestyles rather than the confines of strict societal rules.

For instance, a continued increase in the so-called "Murphy Brown" syndrome was recorded, with a steadily growing number of never-married, older mothers opting to have a child. In the 1995 study, 21% of such women were mothers, up from 18% in 1990 (the first year for which the statistic was available).

At the same time, more women were feeling free to decide to remain childless, an option once frowned upon in American culture. While just 10% of women between 40 and 44 years old were without children in 1976, 18% had made that decision in 1995.

Among those mothers most disposed to working, the birth of a second child increased the incentive to stay home, according to the report.

While more than three-quarters of the older, college-educated mothers returned to their jobs after the first child, only 56% went back after the second baby came along.

Experts said today's women are bucking the lifestyles they grew up with and doing it in a society not at all sure that motherhood and professional work mix.

That cultural debate was highlighted by the overwhelming public attention given to the recent trial of a British air pair convicted of killing her 8-month-old charge while both parents were at work.

"I suspect many women are



Today's women are bucking the lifestyles they grew up with and doing it in a society not at all sure that motherhood and professional work mix. (David Braunser)

struggling with trying to figure out the balance they need to achieve in their lives. They probably came from a mother who stayed at home and they are dealing with the image of what a 'good mother' does," Bianchi said.

image - if it was ever true - of the ideal family where women knew they were supposed to stay home and provide for the children and men knew they were the bread winners. And that really has changed for lots of reasons." (Los Angeles Times)

## Four in one



By Judy Siegel Itzkovich

Mabat Lemada 4 ("View to Science 4"), a CD-ROM in Hebrew by the Center for Educational Technology (CET) in cooperation with Tel Aviv University's Center for Science and Technology Teaching, for ages 10 to 13, NIS 249. Rating: four-and-a-half stars out of five.

environment. The user is presented with a food chain of plants and animals and given problems to solve. A viper is seen in a wheat field: should it be sprayed, killed or otherwise disposed of? Is a chemical or natural solution (introducing a predator that will eat the snake) better? After solving the problems, the youngster has a much better comprehension of the balance of nature and the importance of ecology.

The four programs, upgraded from CET's school software series Rama, is very enjoyable and educational but would have benefited from more - and more sophisticated - animation. The industry section could have offered more than one project. Although the price is higher than average, it's a bargain considering the fact that four separate pieces of software are packed into one disk.

Travel the World with Poldy the Scarecrow: Colors, Shapes and Size, part of the Learn with the World Book Encyclopedia series, a CD-ROM in English only, for children aged three to six, available from World Book-Childcraft Ltd. POB 4364, 91043 Jerusalem, Tel. (02) 678-5605. NIS 249 or significantly less if purchased with other World Book products. Rating: four-out-of-five stars.

Osim, a CD-ROM in Hebrew, challenges the user to think like a businessperson, starting with a concept to solve a problem and following through to its solution by designing, manufacturing, marketing and advertising it to the public at large. The problem posed is how to relieve students' book-bag burden. One could attach balloons to make it hover or build a robot to carry it, but the most practical solution is a wheeled cart to push it along to school.

The program presents many alternatives from design through sales. Using suggestions from in-house advisers (a technician, safety engineer, merchandiser, designer and environmental expert), the child is given a basic allowance of NIS 150,000. All along, he or she must consider quality, expenses, environment and profits, sacrificing one for another. Should it be made of plastic, metal or wood? Should the wheels be large, medium or small? Should it be assembled by machine or by hand? Should second-rate carts be discarded or sold? Should it be advertised in youth magazines, daily newspapers or on billboards, TV or radio? As the little businessperson makes decisions and revises them, the profits and losses are calculated over a period of several months.

Masa Bemd'arechet Hashemesh ("Voyage Through the Solar System") sends the user, as a space navigator, to save seven astronauts who have gotten lost in the universe. Various hints are provided about the planets and, using a database of information on temperature, composition, distance from the sun, time for revolution around the sun and number of moons, the user can conclude where each astronaut is to be found.

Ochlim, Nachon? ("Eating, Right?") is an unusual program to help youngsters learn about beautiful diets. They are asked to enter their gender, weight, height and age and select what they eat on an average day, from among a large list of items. They click on the foods and drag them to plates representing the various meals and snacks. The program then calculates whether they consume too much of a certain food group and too little of another and are awarded with points and told how to improve their diet. A smiling or frowning figure appears as a diet judge, who suggests adding an avocado or more milk, for example, to make it more balanced. Information on the upturned nutrition triangle (with lots of complex carbohydrates and fresh produce on the top and few sweets on the bottom), as well as the basic food groups and a dictionary of terms, are given in detail.

Hayim Beyahad ("Living Together"), the final program, explains the interconnection of the

ecosystem. The user is presented with a food chain of plants and animals and given problems to solve. A viper is seen in a wheat field: should it be sprayed, killed or otherwise disposed of? Is a chemical or natural solution (introducing a predator that will eat the snake) better? After solving the problems, the youngster has a much better comprehension of the balance of nature and the importance of ecology.

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## Teach your kids about the (re)cycle of life



By Ruth Mason

Mom, what happened to all our garbage? Where did it go? This question came from an awed five-year-old who was looking at the first compost pile his family had created.

Composting with your kids has many benefits: First and foremost, it is a fun, consciousness-raising experience and a terrific scientific learning opportunity for them. Questions are sure to arise. Why are we doing this? What's wrong with throwing out all our garbage? How do carrot peels turn into rich, good-smelling earth? You might have to do some research yourself to answer their many questions! Did

you know that over 50 percent of a typical household's trash is organic garbage such as potato peels, citrus rinds and moldy, leftover rice? As the five-year-old quoted above now knows, there are far better destinations for this "garbage" than your trashcan and the city dump.

We all know that garbage and what to do with it is a growing problem. Landfill space is running out. Planners are considering trucking our garbage to the Negev because there is hardly any space left in urban areas.

One effective, inexpensive solution is for families to compost their own organic waste. Compost is a mixture consisting largely of decomposed organic matter and used for fertilizing and conditioning land. It's a process that happens naturally in the forest and everywhere else in nature. A garden is a great place for a compost bin or pile, but you can also compost in your home.

According to Elishava Kaufman, a Jerusalem composting and organic gardening trainer, composting garbage is good because it reduces your trash build-up, cuts down on garbage collection costs, and gives

you and your kids a sense of personal satisfaction. It's good for your garden because it improves the condition of your soil, prevents erosion, conserves water, and increases your yield of flowers, fruits, vegetables and herbs. But perhaps the biggest benefit is that is a simple way of recycling - of entering the circle of life (that your kids already know about from *The Lion King*) - by giving back to the earth what we take from it.

You can talk all you want about ecology, but having your kids participate daily in a project such as composting will teach them lessons that will last a lifetime. This is the spiritual side of composting. Just as we may say a blessing over bread, we can go a step further. We don't just take from the earth, we give back to it.

According to Kaufman, composting is a part of our tradition. It was done by ancient farmers in the land of Israel and is referred to in the Talmud and the Mishna.

Here's how to do it: Tell your kids that anything that once grew can be composted. Have them choose a container to

keep by the kitchen sink in which to deposit all food scraps. You can also include dust, hair, cut grass, and crushed egg shells. Avoid dairy products, meat, and anything oily. Your container can be a small trash can or a bowl on your counter. We use a small metal bowl and when it fills up, we put the contents into a plastic bag. At the end of the day, we put the bag in the refrigerator until we have time to take it to the compost pile in our local community garden.

When you and your children compost, you become microorganism farmers. These bacteria and fungi are tiny creatures that digest your food scraps and transform them into life-giving humus, the heart of the soil eco-system.

If you have a garden, have the kids dig a big hole in the ground. Or you could use a barrel or other large container. Think of your composting project as something like baking lasagna. You want a layer of food scraps covered with a layer of something dry such as twigs, straw, hay, dry leaves or small branches. Cover this with a layer of dirt, and sprinkle water over the whole thing.

To keep the pile moist, you can cover it with a plastic sheet.

The next time you add to your compost pile, use the same three-layer system. Once your pile is about a meter high, leave it alone. At this point it will begin "cooking." Have your kids dig a bit into the pile with their hands to feel the heat. In a few days they will see steam rising as the microorganisms begin decomposing your kitchen scraps and turning them into rich, fertile compost.

After two to three months (when it smells like sweet forest earth), your compost is ready to be added to your gardening soil, put around your house plants, or "fed" to the trees, shrubs and flowers in your yard.

If you don't have a yard but want to get your kids involved in composting, don't despair. You and your children can do earthworm composting in a container right on your porch or even in your living room! For instructions on how to do this, see *Worms Eat My Garbage* by Mary Applehof or call Elishava Kaufman, who has literature about composting in both English and Hebrew, at 050-777332.

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Corner



By Batsheva Mink and David Brauner

# The knight's star: A real show stopper

**B**right, colorful, enormous and truly a show stopper, the amaryllis has no equal. Its regal, starlike, trumpet-form blossoms come in vivid colors and are carried high on thick hollow stems covered in a very fine, smooth wax.

Among all the indoor flowering bulbs, this gorgeous plant is our favorite. Apart from being easy to grow, the amaryllis can be manipulated to flower at different periods. Also, unlike many other bulbs that are grown for indoor decoration, it is quite easy to get these to flower in the second year.

The amaryllis is officially known by its genus name *Hippeastrum*, from the Greek meaning "knight's star" (*hippeus* "star" (*astron*), hence its common name "knight's star lily."

*Hippeastrum* is member of the family *Amaryllidaceae*. All 70 species of the genus are native to the West Indies and tropical South America. The first of the genus to grow in cultivation was the *Hippeastrum equestre* (Barbados lily), which was introduced in 1698. Most bulbs for sale today are the products of hybridizing that began about 200 years ago. Breeders have lately developed many new and exquisite hybrids, which are making this plant ever more popular.

The flowers are unusually showy and large - on average 15 cm. across, but sometimes as wide across as 25-28 cm. The number of flowering stems varies. Generally, there are one or two, but sometimes a very large bulb will put out three stems, if you are lucky. The leaves normally come after the flowers, or start to grow at the same time.

Years ago in Israel, if you wanted to grow one of these lovelies, you had bring the bulbs back from abroad. Today amaryllis is grown here, and every year more varieties are available on the local market.

Many people begin by growing one bulb and then get hooked. By staggering, that is, planting six or more bulbs, one or two at a time, you can enjoy the pleasures of

these magnificent flowers from early January to the end of May. When you see a bulb just beginning to grow, then it is time to plant another one.

The following are our growing instructions which we hope will clear the mysteries that surround the raising and maintenance of these fabulous tropical plants.

**Light:** Amaryllis are easily grown to perfection on a windowsill, or any place where there is light available. In the warmer parts of the country, they can be raised outside in any sunny position that is sheltered against strong wind.

**Potting and watering:** As these plants grow better when their roots are confined, they do not require a very large pot. "Tight potting" is unusual for most bulb plants. The amaryllis is an exception. Choose a clay pot, because the weight will add stability. Don't forget, the plant grows quite tall and becomes "top-heavy." Good drainage is essential, so if you have no clay shards to place in the bottom of the pot, you can use about 3-4 cm. of volcanic rock (Heb. *loof*). Without drainage, the plant is likely to rot from an excess of water.

Fill the pot about half full with a potting mixture (available in nurseries and garden shops), and press it down firmly. Place the bulb (pointed end down) on the firm surface and press in more potting mix around the sides. The bulb should only be two-thirds buried under the soil. The distance from the bulb to the edge of the pot should be six centimeters. Sprinkle on one tablespoon of slow-release fertilizer.

After potting, water well, then do not water again until the soil feels "dryish" to the touch. It generally takes 14-21 days for the bulb to form roots. During this time take care not to overwater the bulb, because there is nothing yet in the way of roots to draw up the water. If the soil is too wet, the bulb will rot. Once the plant is well established, water it whenever the soil becomes dry to the touch.

**Temperature:** If you can provide a temperature of 18°, you can start growing your amaryllis bulb any time. In winter, stand the pot near a warm radiator to spark off growth. When the flower buds appear, the temperature can be lowered to prolong flowering. Heat and light cause the flowers to fade quickly.

**Feeding:** The time to start feeding is after all the flowers have faded. Use either a liquid fertilizer every two weeks or a slow-release fertilizer according to directions. Fertilize every other week, or according to the directions on the label (liquid fertilizer). The aim is to have four good leaves to ensure there will be flowers next year.

**Post-flowering care:** If your plant has two or more flowering stems, you can be sure that the bulb has used up all its energy in producing its magnificent blossoms. It now needs plenty of water, food and sunshine to build up its strength for next year's flowers.

Cut off the dead flowers as they fade, and eventually cut away the flowering stem right down to the bulb level. This way the plant does not use up valuable energy forming seeds.

Remember that the amaryllis must have at least four hours of direct sunshine a day to build up enough energy for future flowering. When the evenings warm up in late spring/early summer the pot can be placed outside in a sunny position.

Towards the end of September, you will notice the leaves of the plant turning yellow and starting to die back, signaling the beginning of the plant's dormant stage. At this time, stop watering and feeding.

If you grow your amaryllis in pots outside, it is a good idea to bring the pots indoors in dry place. Wait until the foliage has completely withered, and remove it completely. Then store the pot in a cool place and do not water during this time. After about two months of "cold storage," the whole process of growth and flowering will begin again.

**Second cycle:** In the wild amaryllis grow all year round. However, in "captive" a short resting period is beneficial.

You need to begin to wake up your bulb before you want it to bloom. From the "wake-up call" to flowering takes about 55 days (approx. eight weeks) in optimum conditions. First remove the top 4-5 cm. of soil with a teaspoon and renew it with fresh potting mix. Water the pot and add a tablespoon of slow-release fertilizer. It is not necessary to transplant the bulb to a larger pot unless it has become very crowded in its own root system. Too much repotting can result in loss of flowers.

After a few years you find small bulbs, known as "pups" appearing outside the mother bulb. The pups can either be left in the pot, increasing the amount of flowers, or detached and repotted separately to sprout new plants. Pups develop slowly and normally bloom when 2-3 years old. If your new plant does not bloom, but keeps sending out green leaves, don't give up on it - it may surprise you. Carry on watering and feeding, giving it the strength to bloom. Note: The leaves will stay green if the plant is watered too frequently. The bulb must be encouraged to go into a dormant state (as explained above), otherwise the chance of flowering is greatly diminished.

**Propagation:** The seed-grown plants may not resemble the parent, but the experiment may be interesting for keen gardeners. So instead of cutting away the flowers, you may want to let them produce seeds and try your luck at sowing them. Let the flowers dry out completely on the bulb, whereupon with luck, seed pods will develop. Remove the seeds, let them dry out and sow them in a large pot or box. Transplant the seedlings to separate pots when they are large enough to handle, and grow in plenty of light.

Since amaryllis bulbs cost NIS 7-10 each in the shops, it is worthwhile raising 10-20 seedlings at a go. However, they take about four



Amaryllis: a gorgeous, vividly colored plant that is easy to grow

years to flower from seed.

**Pests and diseases:** Generally, Amaryllis are trouble-free, but if attacked by thrips, mealy bugs or scale insects, spray once, then repeat after two weeks. If you prefer an inorganic method, soak a cotton swab in alcohol and rub it on the infested area.

Your gardening questions and comments are welcome. Contact Batsheva Mink, P.O.B. 3943, Jerusalem 91039, or David Brauner, e-mail: morris@ashur.cc.hu.ac.il

TOP OF THE WEEK

Amaryllis are among the most photogenic of all house plants. To grow in separate pots, place 2-3 in a white plastic basket lined with thin tissue paper. Push the basket with soil so that it covers the rim of the pot. You will have a beautiful arrangement of flowers.

## Six tips to prevent rabies



**A**fter three deaths due to rabies over the last 13 months, it is worth reiterating some steps that can be taken to prevent the disease.

1. Spay your female animals and neuter the males. The main reservoir for rabies may well be found in the wild, but it is unvaccinated and untended stray animals that form the bridge between wildlife rabies and that of humans. Not only will spaying and neutering cut down the number of strays, but it also lessens the chance of an animal roaming into areas where it will be exposed. Only about 10 percent of the animals in "good homes" remain household pets. Most end up as strays.
2. Make sure that your dogs and cats have rabies shots regularly. The law requires this for dogs, and not for cats, but it is for your own protection. This is true for all cats, but is especially important for those in villages and on the outskirts of cities, where a walk in the fields or woods may bring them in contact with a rabid fox or other animal.
3. Report all stray or otherwise suspicious-looking dogs to the regional or municipal veterinarian. Do not touch stray dogs or cats. And do not handle the carcass of animals, wild or domestic, that have been victims of road accidents. While many healthy animals do get killed on the road, a sick animal, half blind and dazed by rabies, is more likely to become a victim.
4. If you get bitten by any ani-



Don't touch stray dogs or cats - report them to the local veterinarian. (Haim Pinkson)

mal, immediately wash the wound with soap and running water. Use a strong stream of water and wash for several minutes. Notify the Health Ministry office in your area at once. The recent cases were from bites that were not reported or treated.

5. If possible, identify the attacking animal so it can be taken into quarantine.
6. Do not approach or otherwise handle a strange animal. Wild animals that appear in populated areas and seem to be unafraid are most likely sick with rabies.

The symptoms of a rabid animal include: a display of erratic, inappropriate behavior and a tendency to hide in dark corners - in a word, when the animal just doesn't seem to be itself.

Don't contribute to the problem by permitting your pets to produce unwanted puppies or kittens. It is not true that a bitch or a cat has to have at least one litter in order to have a full, healthy life. Animals are not harmed in any meaningful way by being spayed or neutered. Rabies will remain a problem as long as people continue to make a bad situation even worse by behaving irresponsibly.

### Where to eat in Israel

- EILAT**  
TANDOORI Indian Restaurant - The only restaurant in Israel where price SHAKES HANDS with QUALITY and quantity smiles. Live traditional Indian dancing daily. King's Wharf Lagoon Hotel. Tel/Fax: 07-633 879, 636 6674. Open noon-3:30 p.m.; 6 p.m.-midnight
- HERZLIYA PITHUAH**  
TANDOORI Indian Restaurant - Only restaurant where price SHAKES HANDS with QUALITY and quantity smiles. Buffet Lunch NIS 45 (children NIS 23). Open noon-3 p.m.; 7 p.m.-1 a.m. Mercuzim Building, 32 Maskit St. Tel: 09-954 6702, Tel/Fax: 954 6769.
- ATLANTIS FISH & SEA FOOD RESTAURANT** - Three Course Business Lunch for only NIS 59 (incl. one glass of wine). Open daily noon-1a.m. Mercuzim Building, 32 Maskit St. Tel: 09-956 8959.
- JERUSALEM**  
ANGELO RISTORANTE ITALIANO - Frommer's 1997 Guide says, "The most superb pasta in the country..." Also fresh fish & Roman specialties. Kasher Dairy. Call owners Angelo Di Segni / Lori Rosenkranz for reservations. 9 Horkanos. Tel: 02-623 6095.
- BIRD OF PARADISE (Old City)** - Fresh home made food - Dairy and vegetarian cuisine, mellow atmosphere in the heart of the Jewish Quarter, live music and poetry. Kasher 56 Chabad St. (above the Cardo) Tel: 02-626 4723.
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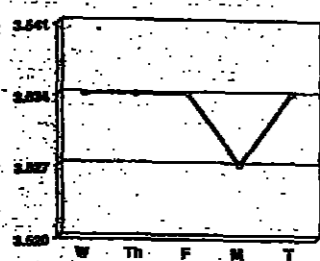
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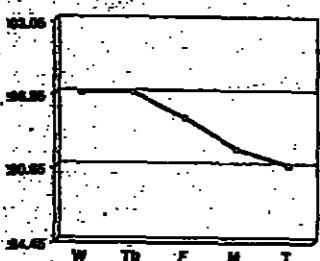
## MARKETS

in brief

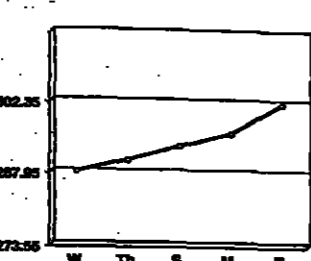
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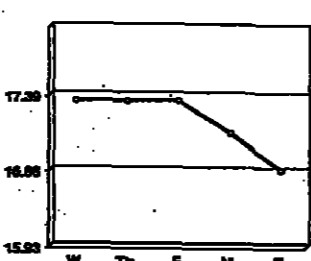
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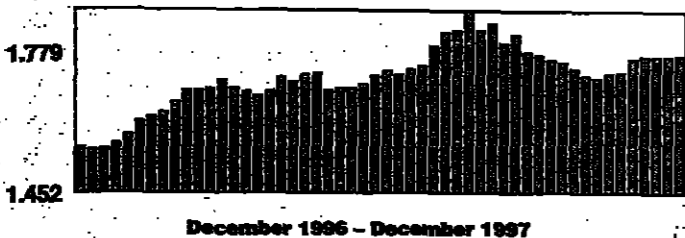
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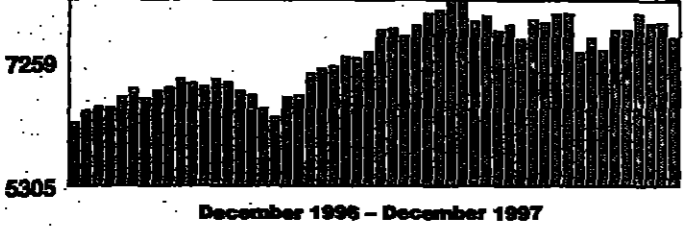
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### Visa, Isracard establish flexible payment plans

Visa and Isracard customers who pay their bills later in the month will not assume any extra fees or interest, company spokesmen confirmed yesterday. Isracard announced Monday its new option of payment on the second, 10th, 15th, or 20th of the month. Visa then announced it was offering its customers an option to pay on the 10th, based on a customer survey of payment preferences. The new system will include American Express and Mastercard.

Diner's, the first credit card in Israel, has always accepted payment on the second or 15th. Visa said its new system will begin in March, while Isracard has not yet set a date, although it is expected to begin in mid-1998. *Nina Gilbert*

### Small businesses good for jobs

Small businesses are able to quickly create jobs and are a central tool in reducing unemployment, Minister of Industry and Trade Nathan Sharansky. Sharansky discussed the role of small businesses in providing a short-term solution to rising unemployment in a recent meeting with Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman.

Sharansky noted that more than 90 percent of the country's businesses employ up to 50 workers. He said that based on the findings of his ministry, more investments should be made in small businesses, as they can make a significant impact. In July 1997, a small business fund was set up by the ministry, and through the end of October 2, 884 loans were approved. The ministry has found that each loan resulted in the addition of three jobs. *Nina Gilbert*

### Harel Hamishmar buys 1/3 of Gvanim Finance

The Harel Hamishmar insurance group said yesterday that it had acquired 33 percent of Gvanim Finance for \$700,000. Gvanim, which started operating earlier this year, deals with portfolio management, advisory services on credit issues, and financial investments. *Dan Gerstenfeld*

### Bank suits against customers rose 82% in '97

The total sum of suits filed by banks against customers rose 82 percent in 1997 to NIS 620 million from NIS 340m. in 1996, according to figures published yesterday by Sagi Interest Accounts.

Meanwhile, customer claims filed against banks fell 25 percent this year to NIS 240m. from NIS 320m. in 1996. The decline was mainly due to the fact that most of the kibbutzim and local authorities preferred to reach an agreement with the banks instead of continuing the legal process.

In 1997 the commercial banks returned NIS 60m. in out-of-court settlements to clients who claimed they were overcharged on interest. *Dan Gerstenfeld*

### Deutsche Telekom, Vocaltac reach deal

Deutsche Telekom and Vocaltac Communications yesterday announced they had reached a final agreement whereby Deutsche Telekom will acquire a 21.1 percent stake in Vocaltac and will purchase more than \$30 million of Vocaltac's products and services, including at least \$21.7 million by December 31, 1999. The agreement, first announced in August, is subject to final approval by the companies' boards of directors. *Jennifer Friedlin*

### MINISTRY OF FINANCE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

TENDER NO. 98/1/D.A.  
SHIPMENT OF GRAINS IN AMERICAN FLAG VESSELS

In connection with the need to meet the Government's undertaking regarding the carriage of goods, the Accountant General invites relevant proposals, which should give rates for the shipment of grain from the United States to Israel, in American Flag vessels for the period between January 15, 1998 and April 15, 1998.

Proposals should be submitted to the Ministry of Finance by January 14, 1998 (at 9 a.m.).

Details are available from Mr. Yitzhak Klein or Mr. Avi Dor, Department of the Accountant General, Ministry of Finance, 1 Kaplan St., Jerusalem, room 533, Tel. 02-531-7457, 02-531-7461. 52020

In first market interference since June:

## Bank of Israel purchases \$70 million to weaken shekel

By DAN GERSTENFELD

The Bank of Israel intervened in shekel trading yesterday for the first time since mid-June, buying almost \$70 million to prevent the currency basket from falling below the lower edge of its trading band, foreign currency dealers said.

Since the government widened the trading band in mid-June, the central bank has not had to intervene in the market. The shekel can fluctuate in a trading band designed to devalue the shekel on an annual basis.

The decision in June to widen the band was followed by an announcement from

Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel to slash interest rates by 1.4 percentage points and a series of steps to liberalize foreign currency trading.

Dealers said the central bank started buying dollars by midday yesterday, just before the setting of the representative rates. They said the currency basket traded below the lower edge of the trading band for most of day.

The shekel depreciated 0.2 percent against the dollar to NIS 3,5340, while it appreciated 0.11% against the basket of currencies to NIS 3,37857.

Dealers attributed the decline of the basket - which is composed of the dollar,

mark, sterling, French franc and yen - to the rise of the US currency abroad.

They added that trading was also influenced by conversions of foreign currency made by the business sector for end-of-the-year payment and from the expiry yesterday of the dollar-shekel options for December.

The main reason for the shekel's strength is that high interest rates prevent the local currency from falling.

The decision of the central bank on Monday to leave interest rates unchanged at 13.4% adds to economists' forecasts that the shekel will remain strong in the near term.

With relatively high interest rates and inflation expectations for 1998 of less than 7%, shekel-linked deposits are considered an excellent investment.

In addition, many Israeli companies prefer to take foreign currency-linked loans, which carry lower interest rates.

Despite that, the Bank of Israel said yesterday the decision to widen the trading band and the foreign currency reform raised the risk of foreign currency trading.

According to figures published by the central bank, the sum of foreign currency-linked loans rose by only \$700m. in the July-November period, compared with a rise of \$4.8 billion in the first half of 1997.



Here's to a good year

A trader at the Frankfurt bourse celebrates the final trading day of 1997, a year which has seen the DAX share index climb a record 47 percent. (Reuters)

## Number of IPOs to rise in 2nd qtr. of '98

By DAN GERSTENFELD

The number of public offerings on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange is expected to rise in the second quarter of 1998, Leumi & Co Underwriters general manager Yakir Gabay told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

Leumi & Co., which was the leading underwriter in 1997, participated in 25 offerings that raised a cumulative NIS 1.6 billion. Gabay said the number of equity offerings is expected to remain low, and companies will prefer to issue convertible and corporate bonds.

He said companies will return to raise money by equity offerings only if the stock market rises further.

According to figures given by the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, 121 offerings were conducted during the first 11 months of 1996, in which NIS 5.7 billion were raised.

Gabay said the number of offerings in February is expected to be relatively low as companies usually prefer to file prospectuses that are based on the annual report rather than on the first nine months of the year.

The number of offerings is, therefore, expected to rise in the April-March period, when companies can begin distributing their annual forecasts.

Gabay added that an improvement in the primary market (the IPO market) depends on the situation in world markets. "The stability of Wall Street is necessary for further recovery of the primary market," he said.

Since most of the companies plan to offer bonds, the rise in the number of public offerings also depends on the conditions of the bond market.

Gabay estimates that bond prices will continue to rise in 1998, as inflation is expected to decline, pushing yields lower.

## Ex-Israel Chemicals boss to get NIS 50,000 monthly pension

The board of directors of Israel Chemicals yesterday approved a monthly pension of NIS 50,000 for Uri Ben-Noon, the former chairman of the Dead Sea Works. Ben-Noon previously demanded a compensation package including options worth NIS 8 million.

Sources described yesterday's board meeting as stormy, with some directors arguing that the agreement was "too generous." Ben-Noon will receive the monthly pension for the rest of his life, as well as severance pay

based on his last monthly salary. Ben-Noon is to resign today from the chairmanship and from Israel Chemicals' board of directors.

Israel Chemicals chief executive Igal Diamant is expected to replace him as chairman of the Dead Sea Works. Last week the company announced Ben-Noon would be leaving.

Long-standing tensions between Ben-Noon and the management of Israel Chemicals came to a head last month, after the company's board of directors decided to appoint a special committee to check investments in its magnesium project. (Globes)

## Psagot unveils high-tech mutual fund

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Psagot, a Tel Aviv-based mutual fund management company, yesterday announced the unveiling of its first high-tech mutual fund, Psagot High Tech.

The fund will be the second high-tech mutual fund in Israel. Earlier this year, Evergreen announced plans to establish a mutual fund that would invest at least 50 percent of its capital in technology companies that had advanced beyond the start-up stage.

Daniel Silbiger, deputy general manager of Psagot, a subsidiary of Bank Leumi, said the company decided to dedicate its 20th mutual fund to investments in the high-tech industry because of the sector's strong growth potential.

"The economy is moving from a labor intensive one to one that depends on research and development in the high-tech sector," Silbiger said. "[High tech] is the leading sector in the economy."

Psagot High Tech will invest at least 50% of its holdings in publicly traded technology companies that operate primarily in the communication, biotechnology and telecommunications fields.

The fund also has the option to invest half its capital overseas.

Experts said they expect more high-tech mutual funds to spring up as the high-tech industry matures and more start-ups go public either on Wall Street or the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

"Israel has had a tremendous venture capital market here and as it gets to the next step there will be more high-tech companies on the stock market and more funds will get involved," said Douglas Goldstein, director of Profile Investments, a division of Oscar Gruss & Son.

The opportunity to invest in high-tech mutual funds also means that the individual investor will be able to minimize the risk associated with investing in the more volatile technology stocks.

"High-tech investments tend to be high yield with high risk, but if an investor buys the fund and there are 10 companies that the risk is dispersed," said Silbiger.

Prior to the establishment of Psagot High Tech, the company set up Psagot Focus, a mutual fund invested in export-related companies that has reported yields of 60% in 1997. Silbiger said.

Psagot's total assets under management total about \$723 million. The company has a 13% market share.

## Gal-Yam: Asia crisis will slow growth

An investigation by State Income Commissioner Tsipi Gal-Yam indicates that the crisis in Asia will mean that growth in 1998 will fall 0.5 percent below the Ministry of Finance's previous forecast.

"The distribution of the various industrial sectors' exports to Asia compared to the rest of the world shows that 33% of diamond production goes to the East, followed

by machinery, appliances, and electronic equipment with 21.5% of their production. Quarried products are next with 20% of their output, followed by optical and medical instruments with 19%," she said.

However, Trade and Industry Ministry deputy director-general for foreign trade Zohar Peri said there's a positive side to the doom-and-gloom forecast.

According to Peri, Gal-Yam said the crisis means new niches are opening up to exporters to the Far East, including Israeli ones, that had previously been held by companies that collapsed in the crisis. "One shouldn't flee in panic. Consideration should even be given to participating in exhibitions, such as the air display in Singapore at the start of the new year," she said.

Korea comprises 20% of all Israel exports to Asia (excluding diamonds), while exports to Thailand make up 11% (excluding diamonds). (Globes)

## IAI chief sees trouble ahead

The chairman of Israel Aircraft Industries said on Monday that American and European conglomerates would put state-owned defense firms out of business if they failed to privatize and merge.

Avigdor Ben-Gal said that he believed Israeli leaders were blocking sale of the companies because they feared the political and financial price was too high.

"In the end we're going to become passe, void of technological or financial power. We'll erode. The competitors, Americans and Europeans, will even push us out of our traditional markets," said Ben-Gal.

The government would take no major steps towards privatizing IAI and two other state-owned defense firms before elections scheduled for 2000, he said.

IAI's 14,000 workers manufacture mainly defense systems for domestic and international markets. IAI competes for contracts against, among others, American giants Boeing and Lockheed Martin, which have merged, with competitors in recent years.

IAI turned a profit in 1997 for the first time in years, earning \$22 million on \$1.7 billion in sales. Ben-Gal said the company had an orders backlog of \$3.3b.

But he said IAI was wasting millions by competing with other Israeli firms, including Israel Industries-TAAS and Rafael (Armaments Development Authority), instead of conducting its marketing, research and development with those companies.

"Israel must decide within a very short time if it can afford such a huge waste of resources or if it should make drastic revisions and reforms in its military industries."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has raised a record NIS 8b. this year from selling shares in state-owned firms and has vowed to privatize many more. Despite this, Ben-Gal is pessimistic.

"As long as the workers oppose it, it won't happen. They have enough political and economic strength to block privatization and the raising of private capital," said Ben-Gal, who was appointed in 1995.

He said the first step was for the Treasury to negotiate a redundancy package with workers in case privatizing and merging the three state-owned companies led to dismissals. Treasury officials have refused to do so because they do not want to allocate billions of shekels for a potentially large lay-off, he said.

Together, the three state-owned companies employ about 25,000 people. Ben-Gal said 3,000 would have to be sent home if reforms were implemented. Union leaders are demanding that redundant workers receive \$250,000 in severance pay, stocks and options, he said.

"We're talking about a total of \$750 million to compensate workers and move ahead with privatization. That's a small price to pay," he said.

Without reforms, he said, the defense firms would exhaust their cash flow, run out of money for research and development, and lose their ability to attract top scientists and engineers.

"If these three problems converge, occur at once, then we're liable to collapse," Ben-Gal said.

The Treasury transferred \$100m. to IAI earlier this month to solve the company's cash flow crisis. In the last five years, the government has spent \$1b. bailing out state-owned defense firms. But IAI's latest government grant came with a provision that the company must raise capital by offering shares to the public or selling off assets the next time it runs out of working capital.

Ben-Gal said another crisis could ensue within a year if no reforms were instituted. (Reuters)

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THE BUSINESS SCENE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN



Climbing into the cockpit of a plane for some hands-on experience at the control panel is a real thrill for many people - especially men who are senior figures in the defense establishment. So, when Turkey's Deputy Defense Minister Lt. General Tuner Kizim (above) visited Israel Aircraft Industries last week, he couldn't resist the opportunity to sit in the cockpit of a Phantom.

Gideon Marks, who served as Chief Financial Officer of the RAD Group for the last 10 years, will join the investment banking team of Jerusalem Global Ltd. within the next few weeks. Marks will be responsible for representing US investors in the bank. NationsBank Montgomery Securities.

During tenure at RAD, Marks managed the financial operations of RAD Datacommunications, and younger companies such as Lancer, Data Communications, RADCom, RADVision, RADNet, and GigaNet.

Danny Schneider has been appointed general manager of the Dan Hotel, Eilat. Schneider previously managed the Palamida and Paradise hotels in Eilat and was deputy manager of the Carlton Hotel, Tel Aviv.

Nissim Shalem has been unanimously elected chairman of the Council of Youth Movements in Israel.

Sylvia Beit Halachimi, spokesperson for Israel Aircraft Industries, and Yoram Shamir, head of Tel Aviv University's department for external relations, have been elected by the Israel division of the International Public Relations Association as Israel's delegates to IPRA. Both are past chairpeople of the Israel Public Relations Association. Shlomi Pank has been appointed marketing and purchasing manager for the local division of

Sbarro, the Italian fast food chain. His responsibilities will include developing additional Sbarro franchises. Pank, 33, was the manager of the first Sbarro outlet in Israel in Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center.

Uriel Azran has been named internal controller for Africa Israel.

Shishu Elitziger has been named marketing manager responsible for training to improve the services of the HomeMan fashion company, which has one of the largest chains of stores in Israel. She is also in charge of HomeMan's public relations and advertising and will work in conjunction with the external PR and advertising firms retained by the company. She was previously the senior accounts executive with Geller Nissim Advertising.

Hania Hacohen has been hired as the external legal advisor to the Israel Property Owners Association. The daughter of District Court Judge Zvi Hacohen, Hacohen has her own legal practice. IPOA chairman Avi Raham said that Hacohen was retained in line with the Association's plans to expand its network of legal advisors.

Attorney Rivka Meller-Olshtitzky is the recently elected chairwoman of the Israel Women's Network, replacing founding chairwoman Alice Shaali, who stepped down after 13 years. The new IWN board comprises Rina Bar Tal, deputy mayor Ra'anana, Gabriella Bar Zakai, deputy mayor of Ma'ale Adumim, Orly Bitty, chairwoman of the national Labor Party Women's Forum; Michal Cafri, advisor on the Status of Women to Communications Minister Limor Livnat and Pazit Elul-Ashkenazi, parliamentary aide to MK Naomi Blumenthal.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Navigating into the new year

With a rocky end to 1997, investors must think about positioning themselves wisely as '98 begins

By NEIL COHEN

The end of the year has been rough. The portfolios mentioned in this column have retreated from some of the gains they made over the last 18 months and underperformed the main indices for the year. However, compared to the starting point, they are still comfortably ahead of the game.

With a Monday morning quarterback's 20/20 vision, I now regret not taking more money out of the New York-traded technology stocks, which have come under such pressure in the last few weeks as a result of the turmoil in the Far East. Both Orbotech and Tower Semiconductor have more than halved from their highs and the portfolios have paid the price of holding them.

As I have said all along, these are buy-and-hold portfolios that aim for absolute rather than relative performance, meaning the capital is protected. So I'm not too bothered that the market has outpaced us in 1997; the returns we generated were pretty decent in absolute terms.

The problem is going to be navigating the murky waters of 1998. First, there is the January effect. That's the phenomenon of US investors selling holdings before year's end to establish tax losses

which they can use to offset their gains; they return to the market after New Year's Day, which usually causes stocks to rise in January. But it's not clear whether that will happen this time. Things in Korea are still pretty nasty - there was another big bankruptcy over the weekend - but the market may decide the worst is behind us.

Similarly, the technology stocks, which some argue were overvalued anyway, have taken quite a pounding, so the bargain hunters turn may have come. Alternately, the pain in Asia - one of the main engines of world economic growth - might be expected to last a long time. That could lead to expectations of a slowdown in demand for such technology products as semiconductors, equipment, disk drives, computers and software. If this happens, international technology companies will feel the pain in their profits and stock prices.

Add to this the growing concern over underlying trends in the technology market - like the impact of the under-\$1000 PC - and who knows what technology stocks will do in 1998.

The Tel Aviv market isn't any

PERSONAL FINANCE



better off. There is plenty of capital around, especially after the year-end influx of funds to various tax-driven vehicles which the institutions will need to invest somewhere. Inflation seems to be coming down, although the government's difficulties in getting the budget passed may well have a negative impact on the macroeconomic outlook if too many expensive concessions need to be made.

The peace process is on a slow track right now, though who knows when the government will be pressured into new concessions. Some of the country's traditional industries are in their last death throes and the government is under pressure to move backwards in time.

While everyone's heart goes out to those who will lose their jobs if yet another textile factory goes out of business, the truth of the matter is that 100 textile factories have closed in this country over the last

few years. If these companies pay workers minimum wage, they simply cannot compete with Egypt or Jordan or China or Indonesia.

The low added-value work has this marring knack for finding its way to where labor is cheapest. So an NIS 9 million subsidy to keep Gibor Sabrina going for a few more months is a pretty meaningless effort to interfere with market forces. Sadly, neither this government nor the last one has come up with any good ideas to address the issue of unskilled or semiskilled workers from traditional industries who have been laid off as those industries decline.

Going into 1998, the picture is one of considerable uncertainty on all macro fronts, worldwide and in Israel. I want to watch the market from the sidelines until some of the volatility goes away. New York has been subject to violent swings ever since the Asian trouble began in Hong Kong, and Tel Aviv has been trailing behind. The local market does not have a very good feel to it right now; calm and patience seem to be the order of the day.

Home Center has done very well for us. But with the real estate market stagnant and the economy slowing, the prospects for a retail stock which sells to the housing market look less than rosy. However, the company has benefited from some consolidation in the sector. If the market goes bad, this is exactly the kind of stock that could be an orphan for a very long time. So I'm going to sell the entire position.

Notwithstanding my concerns about the sector, I'm not about to look a total bargain in the mouth, even if we have to sit with it for a while. All the investment greats

argue that investing is about buying companies not stocks. When a good company's stock drops, investors should react gleefully - this affords buyers the opportunity to buy more stock at a lower price, even up to the point where an investor can own the whole company. Once an investor owns the company, the short-term stock price is irrelevant.

Over the past couple of years I have followed the Mario Laznik group from dire financial straits through the Swary-Yochman recovery plan to the Fishman buy-in.

The market has become bored with Laznik, partly because there has been little news and partly because the stock is very thinly traded; it is closely held in insider hands. Also, last quarter the company and its subsidiaries reported a drop in profits, though closer examination revealed that this was simply a function of some arcane accounting for CPI effects which one quarter inflate profits one quarter and deflate them the next. As a result, the prices of all the shares in the group have drifted downward.

So, I'm putting NIS 2,000 of the proceeds of the sale of Home Center back to work by buying some more shares in Laznik Commerce. Naturally, I have some concerns about the real estate market, but the current share price basically takes account of the company's shopping center holdings and throws in for free a half share in one of the leading office developments in the center of Tel Aviv, the profits from which could easily triple the company's value.

The writer works in the investment industry and may hold positions in securities mentioned in the column. This column should not be taken as advice to buy, sell or continue to hold any securities and anyone acting on the advice of this column does so at his or her own risk.

NEIL'S PORTFOLIO table with columns for No. of shares, Cost/share, Total cost, Current price, and Current value. It lists various investments like Citrus Properties convertible, Teva, Bank Tefahot, etc.

PERFORMANCE CHART table showing performance metrics for various investment categories like Conservative, Aggressive, and General Shares.

MUTUAL FUNDS

Large table of Mutual Funds with columns for Fund's name, unit cost, redemption price, monthly price yield, and NIS assets (million). It includes sections for FLEXIBLE, FOREIGN CURRENCY, COMPANY BONDS, MIXED, and STATE BONDS.

Handwritten text in a box at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or note.

RETZEF CONTINUOUS TRADING SHARES

Table of stock prices for RETZEF CONTINUOUS TRADING SHARES, listing various companies and their share prices.

KARAM SMALL CAPITALIZATION TASE ISSUES

Table of stock prices for KARAM SMALL CAPITALIZATION TASE ISSUES, listing various companies and their share prices.

Main table of stock prices with columns for company names, last prices, and changes.

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Main table of stock prices with columns for company names, last prices, and changes.

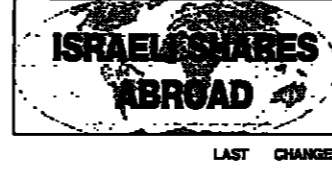


Table of stock prices for ISRAELI BROAD, listing companies like Amex and Nasdaq.

Table of stock prices for NASDAQ, listing various companies.

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Table with columns: LAST CHANGE, CHANGE. Lists various companies like LAL Corp, USG Corp, etc.

Table with columns: LAST CHANGE, CHANGE. Lists various companies like Veeva, Walgreen, etc.

Table with columns: LAST CHANGE, CHANGE. Lists various companies like Allied Domecq, BAT Inds, etc.

Table with columns: LAST CHANGE, CHANGE. Lists various companies like Accor, Aljaleel, etc.

Table with columns: LAST CHANGE, CHANGE. Lists various companies like Sal (Baskin), U.S. Dollar, etc.

Tel Aviv shares data supplied by Pacific Mediterranean Investments, Tel. 09-958-5873. All other data supplied by Commstock Trading Ltd.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Table with columns: Currency (deposit for), 3 MONTHS, 6 MONTHS, 12 MONTHS. Lists rates for U.S. dollar, Pound sterling, etc.

Table with columns: CHECKS AND TRANSFERS, BANKNOTES, Rep. Rates. Lists rates for various currencies like U.S. dollar, German mark, etc.

\*These rates vary according to bank. \*\*Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists DJ Industrials, DJ Transport, etc.

OTHER MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists FTSE 100, Nikkei, etc.

DOLLAR CROSSRATES (US)

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Pound, Euro, etc.

US COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Cocoa, Coffee, etc.

LONDON COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Cocoa, Coffee, etc.

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Silver, Gold, etc.

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Gold, Silver, etc.

LONDON METAL FUTURES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Gold, Silver, etc.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists various currencies like Swiss Franc, etc.

Due to technical difficulties the stocks being published are yesterday's listings.

TASE rises on optimism about budget

Tel Aviv

Stocks rose for a fourth day yesterday as investors were encouraged by progress on the government's efforts to meet its deadline and pass the 1998 budget by tomorrow.

Europe

UK stocks rose for a second day as rallies in Asia and the US offset a decline in retail shares, which were hobbled by lingering concern over Christmas sales.

STOCKS

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Maof 301.99, Dow Jones 7915.97, etc.

Wall Street

NEW YORK (AP) - Stocks extended a rally yesterday, lifting the Dow Jones industrial average back toward 8,000 with just one session left in 1997.

Easing of Korean crisis boosts

The dollar rose against the mark amid optimism that Korea's financial crisis may be easing. The dollar was little changed against the yen as concern that the Bank of Japan may sell dollars to prop up the yen offset expectations that Japan's economic weakness will drag its currency lower.

The dollar could rise as high as 1.82 marks early next year, said Ramon Bauza, a director in foreign exchange at Bank Boston.

CURRENCIES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Dollar 3.5340, Basket 3.7857, etc.

Japanese stocks rose, led by banks, after US, Japanese and European financial institutions agreed to help alleviate South Korea's short-term credit crunch.

The yen fell 16.3 percent to 1,590 to the dollar. That hurts Japanese exporters who compete with Korea, as a weaker won makes Korean exports cheaper.

Palladium hitch increases prices

Palladium rose yesterday as concern grew that supplies of the precious metal from Russia will be delayed in the coming months. Russia, the world's largest palladium producer, failed to ship any precious metals in the first half of this year because of internal wrangling over which government department controlled export licenses.

London crude oil prices rose as much as 20 cents yesterday, after falling to their lowest level in 22 months Monday. Prices recovered as some traders opted to buy back contracts, viewing oil as cheap at these levels.

COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists Gold 290.15, Crude Oil \$16.65, etc.

Zinc rose as Chinese exports of the metal, which more than doubled this year, are expected to drop off in 1998. China's shipments of as much as 700,000 tons of zinc this year, well above forecasts and up from 280,000 tons in 1996, meant the global market in 1997 was close to balance when it was expected to be under-supplied.

Coffee fell as increasing shipments of coffee from Central American growers boosted US stockpiles. The arrival of new supplies from Central America helped coffee inventories monitored by the Coffee, Sugar & Cocoa Exchange in New York rise to a two-month high of 99,990 132-pound bags last week.

US bonds fall as concern over Asia wanes

US bonds fell yesterday, pushing yields to their highest in almost two weeks, as waning concern that South Korea will default on its debt reduced demand for US securities and a report showed soaring consumer confidence.

South Korea's creditors, including US banks J.P. Morgan & Co., Chase Manhattan Corp. and Citicorp, agreed to allow Korean borrowers extra time to repay loans, preventing defaults for now. In addition, the creditors, which met in New York Monday, are trying to

BONDS

Table with columns: Last, Change. Lists US 30-year T-bill yield 5.97, etc.

arrange a new loan that could exceed \$10 billion or repackage Korean debt and sell it to investors. US bonds have rallied since October as tumbling Asian financial markets pushed international investors to the guaranteed returns of US Treasuries. Signs now of

stability in the Pacific Rim - helped by billions in international aid, including International Monetary Fund bailouts for Indonesia, Thailand and Korea - is slowing that "flight to quality" move, traders said. International lenders "have very little alternative" except to help repair Korea's economy, said Joseph Liro, chief economist at CIBC Oppenheimer.

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# Gross under fire

LONDON (Reuters) - Tottenham's Swiss coach Christian Gross was in danger of becoming just a quirky statistic of English soccer as doubts about his future grew yesterday after just 35 days at the London club.

Gross has struggled to lift relegation-threatened Tottenham since he officially took charge on November 25 and the team have suffered hammerings at the hands of London rivals Chelsea and unglamorous Coventry.

Speculation is mounting in Britain that he may join Brian Clough and Steve Coppell as one of the shortest-serving managers in English soccer history.

Gross has been linked with the vacant job of Swiss national team coach. His future at Spurs was cast further into doubt on Monday when his fitness coach and friend Fritz Schmid was refused a British work permit.

Tuesday's newspapers offered no relief as Gross came under fire from England international striker Les Ferdinand, who says his injury problems have been worsened by the manager's attitude towards training.

Ferdinand claims he was unable to play in the 1-1 draw against Arsenal last weekend because he was not allowed to rest an injured leg.

The shortest reign at an English club was the three days Bill Lambton spent at Scunthorpe United in April 1959.

Steve Coppell quit Manchester City after just 33 days in 1996.

Former Nottingham Forest manager Clough was at Leeds for just 44 days in 1974 before he parted company with the club after a poor start to the season.

# Chelsea's hopes fizzle

LONDON (Reuters) - Chelsea failed to make ground on Premier League leaders Manchester United when they were beaten 1-0 away by struggling Southampton on Monday.

A 16th minute goal by Kevin Davies - his 11th of the season - proved the difference in a game made difficult by strong winds.

United lost 3-2 to Coventry on Sunday but third-placed Chelsea, who were held to a 1-1 home draw by Wimbledon on Friday, again missed a chance to close in.

They now trail the leaders by seven points. Blackburn are second, five points off the pace.

The only goal on Monday came when former England midfielder Carlton Palmer latched on to Jason Dodd's long ball down the right and sent in a low cross. It looked to be defender Frank Sinclair's ball but Davies reacted sharply to reach it first and poke it past Chelsea goalkeeper Ed De Goey.

Southampton looked keener all over the pitch and should have gone further ahead. But Davies and Matthew Oakley shot wide

# Kallis ton helps S. Africa to draw

MELBOURNE (AP) - A defiant century by Jacques Kallis helped South Africa force a draw in the first cricket Test against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground yesterday.

Set to make 381 to win in a minimum of 120 overs, South Africa survived four sessions to score 273 for seven to avoid defeat on a turning pitch.

Shaun Pollock, unbeaten on 15 and Lance Klusener, six not out, batted out 16 nervous minutes between them after South Africa began the last hour on 243 for six.

Fast bowler Glenn McGrath trapped Dave Richardson for 11 runs after 47 minutes.

Shane Warne spun his leg spinners sharply and dangerously and, backed by the 11,249 spectators, had the visitors struggling for survival.

South Africa owes a great deal to Kallis and then skipper Hansie Cronje, who weathered some anxious moments before and after lunch to put on 123 runs for the fourth wicket.

The pair rescued South Africa from Warne, who made inroads to the batting with the wickets of opener Adam Bacher and Daryll Cullinan in the space of nine balls.

Kallis' chanceless maiden Test couldn't have been better timed. He won the man of the match award for his effort.

The highly talented No.3 had scored only one half century in his previous eight Test innings.

But on a wicket that called for patience, the 22-year showed great maturity in defying Warne in his 279-ball innings that lasted just three minutes under five hours.

He resumed the day with Bacher on 40 and hit just six boundaries in all as he batted for just over two sessions to save the game for South Africa.

Only Pakistan has batted over four sessions in the fourth innings against captain Mark Taylor's Australians.

On Taylor's captaincy debut, Pakistan handed out a one-wicket defeat in Karachi in 1994-95.

South Africa resumed the day on 79 for one, needing another 302 runs in a minimum of 90 overs to force an unlikely win.

Bacher was brilliantly caught by Taylor at slip and Warne bowled his nemesis Cullinan for naught. Cullinan lasted just eight deliveries.

Cullinan has now made 31 runs at 4.42 in four Tests in Australia and 153 runs at 12.75 overall against Warne.

Kallis and Cronje took South Africa to lunch on 139 for three and the game was still far from over.

Cronje paced his innings well and reached his half century as Australia struggled for a breakthrough in the post-lunch session.

Vice captain Steve Waugh, used as the sixth bowler, provided the side with the long-awaited wicket. Cronje on 70 fell to a leg side trap, flicking a half volley to Taylor.



MAIDEN VOYAGE - South African batsman Jacques Kallis is jubilant after reaching his first Test century against Australia. (Reuters)

Premier League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man United	21	14	4	3	49	16	46
Blackburn	21	11	8	2	38	21	41
Chelsea	21	12	3	4	46	21	39
Liverpool	20	11	4	5	36	19	37
Leeds United	21	10	5	6	30	23	35
Arsenal	20	9	7	4	35	33	34
Derby County	21	9	5	7	34	28	32
West Ham	21	10	1	10	28	32	31
Leicester	21	7	7	7	25	21	2
Aston Villa	21	7	5	9	25	27	26
Newcastle	20	7	5	8	21	25	26
Wimbledon	20	6	6	8	21	24	24
Southampton	21	5	8	8	20	28	23
Coventry City	21	5	8	8	20	28	23
Crystal Palace	21	5	8	8	20	28	23
Sheff Wed	21	6	5	10	32	44	23
Bolton	21	4	9	8	19	33	21
Everton	21	5	5	11	20	31	20
Tottenham	21	5	5	11	19	37	20
Barnsley	21	5	3	13	19	51	18

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TOYOTA TERCEL, 1988, 2 door, good condition, automatic, AC, steel roof rack, 84,000 miles, \$4700. Tel. 02-652-5620. [791257]

**UNRESTRICTED**

SUBARU '91, WHITE, 1.6, original owner, 125,000 km., immediately available, excellent condition. Tel. 02-624-4718, 02-623-4255. [791252]

FIAT UNO, 1996, 1.4 cc, ac, stereo tape, alarm, standard transmission, hatchback, 31,000 km., company car, all taxes paid, no accidents, 10,000 NIS below book. Tel. 02-993-1580 (NS), 050-316-715 (NS).

SUBARU LEGACY 1992, 1.6cc, power steering, power brakes, power windows, tape, immobilizer alarm, no accidents. 2nd owner, 15% below book. Tel. 02-993-1493 (NS), 050-316715 (NS). [13574]

**VEHICLES**  
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1997 OPEL CORSA, only 100 km., manual, 1400 cc., 5 doors, air-bags, immobilizer, alarm, light yellow, from new immigrant. Tel. 03-822-7453. [791337]

**VEHICLES**  
 Sharon Area

**PASSPORT**

1991 VOLKSWAGON GOLF, 3 door, full options, manual, metallic red, very nice sporty car. COLIN Tel. 052-423-327, 09-742-9517. [791233]

1991 FORD PROBE, 2 door coupe, manual, black, outstanding car. Full options. Air conditioning, power steering, tape. COLIN Tel. 09-742-9517, 052-423-327. [791233]

1992 MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE, 2 door, full options. 1) red, 1) black. Stunning sports cars. COLIN Tel. 09-742-9517, 052-423-327. [791233]

VOLKSWAGON GOLF 1992, 5 door full options automatic, 1) blue, 1) blue-green. They look fantastic for the year. Automatic, power steering, air conditioning. COLIN Tel. 09-742-9517, 052-423-327. [791233]

1994 - 5 TRICO (SUSUKI engine) 900 cc, 5 gear, power/steer, air con, electric windows, 4 doors, radio tape, white, very tidy car. Returns 23 km per liter. For quick sale - 17,000 NIS. Colin, Tel./Fax: 09-742-9517, 052-423-327. [13785]

HYUNDAI ACCENT 1996. One careful lady owner, silver, 1.5 manual + extras including power steering alarm, central locking. Tel. 09-862-8256, [791183]

1995 HYUNDAI ACCENT, metallic silver, autopower steering, air-conditioning, electric windows, aerial, radio-tape, alarm, 37,000 km. Car is like new. Tourist only, \$7250. Colin, Tel. 052-423327, Tel/fax 09-742-9517. [137239]

1990 HONDA ACCORD, 2 door coupe, autopower steering, air-conditioning, radio tape, full leather, dark metallic gray, super car. Must sell now, home price \$4900. Colin, Tel. 052-423327, Tel/fax: 09-742-9517. [791240]

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# Everything's coming up roses

By JOSH BARR and NICHOLAS J. COTSONIKA

The wait for the Michigan football team is nearly over. After 49 years, the top-ranked Wolverines need just one more victory to claim their first national championship since 1948.

Michigan (11-0) will get its chance tomorrow when it plays No. 8 Washington State in the Rose Bowl. If the Wolverines falter, the national title will be decided in Friday night's Orange Bowl, in which second-ranked Nebraska plays third-ranked Tennessee. That will be the final game for Cornhuskers Coach Tom Osborne, who has announced his retirement, and Volunteers senior quarterback Peyton Manning, assuming Manning's injured right knee allows him to play.

After Tennessee's 30-29 victory over Auburn in the Southeastern Conference championship game December 6, he was hospitalized with a ruptured bursa sac, and the recovery has been slow. If he can't play, he would be replaced by sophomore Tee Martin.

Among the other notable matchups tomorrow, two of the nation's most renowned coaches meet in the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, when Joe Paterno's Penn State team plays Steve Spurrier's Florida team. North Carolina will play its first game under new coach Carl Torbush when it plays Virginia Tech in the Gator Bowl. In the Sugar Bowl, two teams that had national title aspirations thwarted in their regular season finales will meet when Florida State plays Ohio State.

But the game is the Rose Bowl, in which Michigan and Washington State (10-1) have taken different approaches since arriving in the Los Angeles area last weekend.

Washington State, making its first Rose Bowl appearance since the 1930 season, is practicing at Los Angeles Coliseum, a venue similar in size to the Rose Bowl. The Cougars had been taking it easy until Saturday, when Coach Mike Price said enough was enough. With the game drawing nearer, Price said he will impose a curfew on his players for the rest of their trip.

Michigan, which went to five Rose Bowls in seven seasons from 1986 to 1992, arrived December 19, one week earlier than in those previous trips. Coach Lloyd Carr introduced training-camp-style, two-a-day practices for the first two days to get the kinks out.

Many Wolverines are worrying about West Coast Flu—an ailment that supposedly affects players who get too interested in the scenery and forget about the game. But the early start might be the remedy.

The Wolverines have been keeping to themselves and for the most part staying away from local attractions. But a few players are becoming an attraction: During the team's appearance at the annual Beef Bowl at Lawry's in Beverly Hills, nose guard Kyle Young and offensive lineman Paul Fannous each ate seven 16-ounce servings of prime rib before coaches put a halt to the feeding frenzy. On its trip to Lawry's, Washington State's players consumed 520 pounds of beef.

Meanwhile, in Miami, Nebraska and Tennessee will be rooting for Washington State. A loss by Michigan would give the Cornhuskers (12-0) an opportunity to close Osborne's 25-year run as coach with a third national title in four seasons. It also would open the door for Tennessee (11-1) to claim its first national title since 1951.

"Playing a team like Nebraska is certainly a great challenge for our team," said Tennessee Coach Phillip Fulmer. "They have been there so many times and have such a long and fine tradition."

(The Washington Post)

# Colorado State beats Missouri in Holiday Bowl

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The Colorado State Rams finally got their Holiday Bowl thing right. After consecutive losses in the 1994 and '95 games, the No. 18 Rams were back in San Diego and beat the No. 19 Missouri Tigers 35-24 Monday night with big plays in the 20th Holiday Bowl.

San Diego product Darran Hall raced untouched for a touchdown on a Holiday Bowl-record 85-yard punt return in the third quarter to give the Rams the lead for good, and scored on a 14-yard reverse on the game's first drive.

**Carquest Bowl**  
Georgia Tech 35, W Va 30  
Joe Hamilton passed and ran for 356 yards and three touchdowns to help Georgia Tech win at Miami's Carquest Bowl, extending the Mountaineers' bowl losing streak to seven games.

Both teams finished the season 7-5.

The game drew only 28,262 fans, the smallest crowd in the bowl's eight-year history. Carquest officials had hoped for 50,000 in 73,192-seat Pro Player Stadium.

**Humanitarian Bowl**  
Cincinnati 35, Utah State 19  
Chad Plummer threw for one TD and ran for another as Cincinnati won the inaugural Humanitarian Bowl in Boise, Idaho.

# Mavs' 'Rodman strategy' fails

## Jordan ties consecutive-game double-digit scoring mark in Bulls' 8th-straight win

CHICAGO (AP) — From now on, repeatedly fouling a poor free-throw shooter away from the ball might be called "The Bubba Wells Strategy." Of course, Dallas' Don Nelson might be the only coach ever to try it again after Dennis Rodman made the strategy backfire.

"Nothing gets to Dennis Rodman," Rodman said after going 9-of-12 from the line as part of an 11-point, 27-rebound, eight-assist performance that helped the Chicago Bulls defeat the Mavericks 111-105 Monday night. "The only way to get to me is to take my money."

Michael Jordan, the pre-eminent money player, had 41 points for his NBA record-tying 787th consecutive double-digit scoring game as the Bulls stretched their winning streak to eight games and handed Dallas its 12th consecutive loss.

No game this season featured a strategy as unique as Nelson's against Chicago.

Wells, a rookie who has played only 45 minutes all season, fouled Rodman six times well away from the ball — three at the end of the second quarter and three more at the end of the third.

"We got beat every night anyway," Nelson said. "Hey, it didn't work, but I'll do it again. It's probably better than Michael making every shot."

"You don't have to be too smart to see a guy shooting 39 percent (from the line) ... and the Bulls scoring 1.2 points per possession. Do the math and it's not close."

Bulls coach Phil Jackson said Nelson told the referees of his plan before the game.

Jackson told Rodman, "Be prepared to shoot some foul shots," and said he had confidence in the Worm's free-throw form.

Rodman went 4-for-6 at the end of the second quarter and 5-for-6 at the end of the third. The latter string helped the Bulls turn a one-point game into an 84-77 lead entering the fourth.

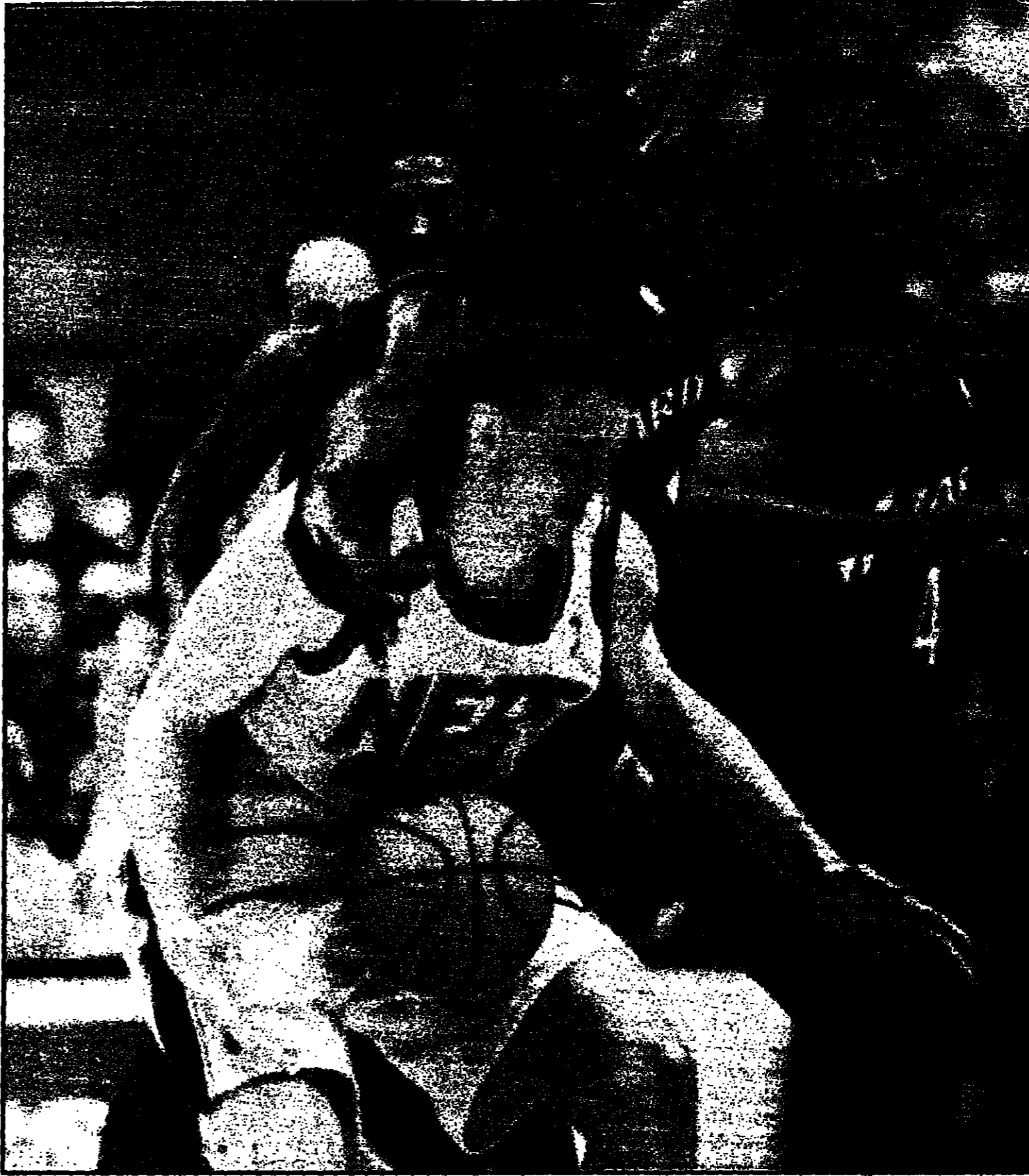
"I wasn't surprised. (Nelson) has an awful team," said Rodman, who matched his career highs for free throws attempted and made.

"I think Don Nelson is a great coach. I respect him, but that was a crazy, crazy game plan. It's ridiculous to embarrass a player like that."

And Wells was embarrassed. He fouled out in just 3 minutes of playing time, breaking the 41-year-old NBA record of 5 minutes set by Dick Farley of the Syracuse Nationals.

Jordan had a nicer record to add to his list as he matched Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's string of double-figure performances. Jordan last failed to score at least 10 points on March 22, 1986.

**Hornets 120, Rockets 101**  
David Wesley scored 21 of his season-high 32 points in the first



ASSAULT AND BATTERY — Nets forward Keith Van Horn is fouled by Washington's Chris Webber in first-period action. New Jersey beat the Wizards 99-91.

quarter, leading a barrage of three-point shooting as Charlotte ended its three-game road losing streak.

The Hornets, second in the NBA in 3-point shooting at 37 percent, connected on 12 of 18 from behind the arc and shot 60 percent overall.

Del Curry came off the bench to add 23 points, going 6-of-8 from 3-point range, while Anthony

Mason had 20.

Clyde Drexler and Kevin Willis topped Houston with 18 points apiece and Charles Barkley had 12 rebounds.

**Nets 99, Wizards 91**  
Rookie Keith Van Horn had a career-high 32 points and 10 rebounds and host New Jersey avenged its worst loss of the season.

Jayson Williams added 19 points and 22 rebounds as the Nets prevailed despite making just two field goals in the fourth quarter.

Chris Webber had 22 points for Washington before fouling out with 4:19 to play.

Sam Cassell added 19 points for New Jersey before fouling out and Gill had 12. Van Horn shot 10-of-19 from the field and 10-of-10 from the line.

EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Miami	19	7	.730	0
Orlando	17	12	.586	2 1/2
New Jersey	16	12	.571	3
New York	16	12	.571	3
Boston	14	13	.519	4 1/2
Washington	13	16	.448	5 1/2
Philadelphia	7	20	.259	10 1/2

# Francis's hat-trick lifts Penguins

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Ron Francis scored three times for his first multiple-goal game of the season as the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the New York Islanders 5-1 on Monday night.

Francis got his 11th hat-trick and his first in more than two years. He scored his third goal on a power play at 14:45 of the third period. Jaromir Jagr and Stu Barnes assisted on all three goals.

**Devils 3, Sabres 1**  
Visiting New Jersey scored twice on its first three shots en route to its eighth win in 11 games.

**Capitals 4, Blues 2**  
Adam Oates had a goal and an assist during a four-goal first period and host Washington beat St. Louis, who played without the injured Brett Hull.

Washington, which had managed only eight goals in its last seven games, scored four times on 13 shots against St. Louis goaltender Grant Fuhr, quickly erasing a 1-0 deficit.

**Lightning 2, Sharks 1**  
Backup goaltender Derek Wilkinson stopped 29 shots and Dino Ciccarelli scored a rare Tampa Bay power-play goal as the Lightning won at home.

Wilkinson, subbing for injured starter Daren Puppa, won for the first time (1-5-1) in his initial appearance this season and 10th of his career.

**Stars 2, Red Wings 2**  
Host Detroit and Dallas did nothing to settle who is No. 1 nearing the mid-season mark as they played to a tie.

The Stars and Red Wings remained tied atop the Central Division, each with an NHL-best 56 points. It also extended season-long unbeaten streaks for both clubs, as Detroit hasn't lost in its last seven and Dallas in its last six.

**Avalanche 1, Canadiens 1**  
Patrick Roy stopped 32 shots as host Colorado tied Montreal for its

12th stalemate of the season.

The Avalanche pulled even with the New York Rangers for most ties in the league. Both teams are in position to break the all-time record of 24 in season, held by the 1969-70 Philadelphia Flyers.

**Coyotes 5, Flames 3**  
Bob Corkum and Keith Tkachuk each scored twice to lead Phoenix to an away win.

Corkum's second shorthanded goal of the season at 9:23 of the first period gave Phoenix an early lead and, although Calgary would battle back to tie the game three times, the Coyotes never let the Flames take a lead.

WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Central Division				
Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Dallas	25	9	.735	0
Detroit	24	9	.727	0
St. Louis	22	14	.611	2 1/2
Phoenix	17	16	.515	5 1/2
Chicago	13	18	.417	8 1/2
Toronto	13	19	.406	9

WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Pacific Division				
Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
San Jose	23	8	.743	0
LA Kings	22	7	.759	0
Phoenix	17	9	.654	6 1/2
Portland	17	10	.630	5
Sacramento	11	19	.365	12 1/2
Golden State	7	20	.259	15
LA Clippers	6	24	.200	17 1/2



FITS LIKE A GLOVE — Avalanche goalie Patrick Roy makes a glove save against the Canadiens. Colorado and Montreal drew 1-1.

CRITICS' CHOICE

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AIZENSTADT

Frieder Bernius leads the Israel Chamber Orchestra and his own Stuttgart Chamber Choir in Haydn's Die Schöpfung (The Creation), a most appropriate work to celebrate the new year...



Conductor Frieder Bernius leads the Israel Chamber Orchestra and the Stuttgart Chamber Choir in a concert tonight in Tel Aviv.

MUSICAL

HELEN KAYE

After a shaky start because the revolving stage didn't, Fiddler on the Roof, starring Topol in the title role, is spinning into orbit. Ticket demand has been so great that the Haifa run may be extended...

FILM

ADINA HOFFMAN

\*\*\* ULEE'S GOLD \*\*\* As the title character in Victor Nunez's vividly small and

unhurried film, Peter Fonda is so dry, so stolid, so deliberately blank - his long-legged gait stowed by a slight limp, his line delivery flat and functional as an ironing board, his gaze deadened by old pain gone dull - that his performance comes precariously close to bad...

WEATHER map showing weather conditions across Israel and surrounding regions.

AROUND THE WORLD table with columns for location, low, high, and weather conditions.

WINNING CARDS section featuring KKK 10 10 and WINNING NUMBERS for yesterday's daily Lotto drawing.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS: 1 Italian food is the finished article (5), 4 But he helps out the rest of the week too (3,6), 9 Lieutenant covered by complete protection (7), 11 Relief from soldiers' malice (7), 12 Keep left in brick-transporter (4), 13 Jack or King East received - not this card though? (5), 14 Girl is to finish about one (4), 17 Boss's assistant, commonly a girl, an African high-flier (9,4), 19 Characters from Magdalen scorn such a gossip (13), 21 Family keeps money in tin (4), 22 Seize a point, making a complaint (5), 23 Put is to north of farm building (4), 26 Tablet one takes on passenger seat (7), 27 Rest leg, damaged in race (2,5), 28 Possible harm, going round different Yorkshire towns (9), 29 Subdued, we tucked into fish (5), DOWN: 1 How fast we run to pillar-box? (9), 2 Woman with overlook bill for varnish (7), 3 Opposed to contents of Asian Times (4), 5 Child's room is not even somewhere to learn in the winter (7,5), 6 Flower came up (4), 7 Stopped to dig - need straightening (7), 8 Make submission for grant (5), 10 Thoroughly associating cause with development (4,3,6), 15 There's nothing of the animal in him (5), 16 Guide I brought in to conspiracy (5), 18 Poor road, so ran from the plant (6,3), 19 Red charcuter drunk (7), 20 City's light interrupted by gas explosion (7), 21 Skip to take exercise in vehicle (5), 24 A substitute for sin (4), 25 Almost obstruct united group of countries (4)

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-29.

SOLUTIONS section providing answers for the cryptic crossword.

QUICK CROSSWORD

- ACROSS: 1 Easy gallop (6), 3 Fruit (5), 8 Concur (5), 9 Contempt (7), 10 Contradict (7), 11 Ancient you' (4), 12 Fish (3), 15 Necessity (4), 16 Ah met (4), 18 Dine (3), 21 In case (4), 23 Withdraw (7), 25 Forgetfulness (7), 26 German river (5), 27 Lacative 's', 28 Agreement (3), DOWN: 1 Luck (6), 2 Care for (7), 3 Close of the day (8), 4 Finest (4), 5 Arrive at (5), 6 Pulled hard (6), 7 Worship (5), 13 Lights (8), 16 Anthropoloid (7), 17 Glad (6), 18 Test (6), 20 Walkway (6), 22 Practical wisdom (5), 24 Centimes (4)

TV

- 11:30 High-tech Culture, 20:00 Step By Step, 20:30 Challenges, 21:10 Kung Fu II, 22:30 Land's End, 23:15 American Gothic, MIDDLE EAST TV (24/27), 7:00 TV Shop, 14:30 Body Electric, 15:00 Basic Training, 15:30 The 700 Club, 16:00 Larry King, 17:00 Gerbert, 17:25 Creation Station, 17:30 Front and Phil, 18:10 Walk Till You Have Kids, 18:35 Saved by the Bell, 19:00 Showbiz, 19:30 World News, 20:00 Christmas, 20:00 Christmas, 20:50 Movie: White Christmas, 22:00 Arabic Music, 23:00 The 700 Club, 23:30 CNN News, ARABIC PROGRAMS, 18:30 Where Are We Going?, 19:00 Ramadan, 19:00 News, HEBREW PROGRAMS, 18:30 News flash, 19:31 Hebrew Songs, 20:00 News, 20:45 Alonim in Life, 20:50 Conference Call, 21:30 Barbara Walters special, 22:00 Dark Skies, 22:10 Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, 23:30 News, CHANNEL 2 (22), 6:15 Today's programs, 6:30 Today's Best, 7:00 Coffee with Tel-Ad, 9:00 Ruby, 10:00 Mommy Market, 10:30 News, 12:00 Brotherly Love: Big Brother, 12:30 Hebrew, 13:00 News, 13:30 Junior News, 14:00 Home and Away, 14:30 To the Max, 15:00 Timon and Pumbaa: Quack Pack, 16:00 The Bold and the Beautiful, 16:50 Different Driving, 17:00 Five with Rami, 17:30 Sport TV, 18:00 Fort Charles, 19:05 Lisa Grown-Ups, 20:00 News, 20:30 Ramat Aviv Gimme, 21:15 Hatzvot, 21:45 Gov Night, 22:50 Absolute Justice (Hebrew) - 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**'I can,' says Nike**

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — "Just Do It" just isn't doing it for Nike anymore. On New Year's Day, the world's largest athletic shoe manufacturer will introduce a new slogan: "I Can." Even though "Just Do It" isn't being abandoned entirely, the change is seen as a big gamble for a company whose advertising consistently ranks among the most popular and effective in the nation.

**New Year's eve race to draw thousands**

SAO PAULO (AP) — Some 10,000 athletes from around the world will take to the streets of South America's biggest city on New Year's eve to compete in the traditional year-end St. Silvester road race.

# East beats West in Eurostars contest

By ORI LEWIS

The East team beat the West 129-107 in a blaze of color and fanfare at the FIBA Eurostars basketball extravaganza in Tel Aviv yesterday. The event, which FIBA, international basketball's governing body, inaugurated last year and has modeled on the NBA All-Star game, is intended to highlight the European game.

representatives on the East squad: Rashard Griffith, Oded Katash and Nadav Henefeld. The two teams kept level until 3:30 in the first quarter when East coach Dusan Ivkovic replaced Dino Radja and Arturas Karnishovas with Henefeld and Griffith, at which point the East pulled away to a 41-36 first-quarter lead. By the half, the lead had grown to 73-53, with Karnishovas leading the way with 17 points. For the West, three players led the halfway stage with eight points: Predrag Danilovic, Aleksandar Djorjevic and Wendell Alexis.

ued affair in the second half. By the third quarter, the East had a 100-86 lead and in the final period, it was clear that the West could not catch up, despite some very accurate shooting from Djorjevic. Arturas Karnishovas was named the game's MVP, and Djorjevic won the three-point shooting competition at halftime, ahead of Guy Goodes, the Maccabi player who is currently with Caserta of the Italian second division.

High scorers for the West: Aleksandr Djorjevic 23, Vladimir Stepania 18, Predrag Danilovic 13. East: Arturas Karnishovas 19, Predrag Drobnyak 18, Byron Scott 18.

East: 4-Byron Scott (guard, Panathinaikos), 5-Sergei Bazarevic (guard, T.T. Ankara), 6-Damir Mulaomerovic (guard, Cibona Zagreb), 7-Petar Naumoski (guard, Efes Pilsen), 8-Rashard Griffith (center, Maccabi Tel Aviv), 9-Nicos Economou (forward, Panathinaikos), 10-Oded Katash (guard, Maccabi Tel Aviv), 11-Gintaras Einikis (center, Antodor Saratov), 12-Nadav Henefeld (forward, Maccabi Tel Aviv), 13-Arturas Karnishovas (forward, Olympiakos), 14-Dino Radja (center, Panathinaikos), 15-Predrag Drobnyak (center, Partizan Belgrade). Coach: Dusan Ivkovic (Olympiakos Piraeus).

West: 5-Predrag Danilovic (forward, Kinder Bologna), 6-David Rivers (guard, Teambasket Bologna), 7-Gregor Fucika (forward, Teambasket), 8-Zeljko Rebraca (center, Benetton Treviso), 9-Zoran Savic (center, Kinder Bologna), 10-Aleksandar Djorjevic (guard, Barcelona), 11-Vladimir Stepania (center, Union Olympija), 12-Wendell Alexis (forward, Alba Berlin), 13-Alberto Herreros (forward, Real Madrid), 14-Antoine Rigau (guard, Kinder Bologna), 15-Vassilij Karssev (guard, Alba Berlin). Coach: Entore Messina (Kinder Bologna).

# Woods, Hingis voted as top athletes of 1997

NEW YORK (AP) — Tiger Woods has a smile that won the hearts of even non-golf fans and a game that matched outlandish hype.

Woods, whose success on the course — where he won five times and set the PGA Tour single-season money record — matched his social and economic impact off it, yesterday became the first golfer voted Male Athlete of the Year by the AP in 26 years.

The athletes were chosen by a panel of US print and broadcast reporters.

The award came as a birthday present for Woods, who turned 22 yesterday.

"I thought I had a good year, but I never expected this," said Woods, whose record-shattering victory in the Masters last April was also voted sports Story of the Year by the AP.

Woods was the first golfer to be honored as Male Athlete of the Year by the AP since Lee Trevino in 1971 and is only the fifth golfer to receive the award since it was instituted in 1931.

He joins Gene Sarazen (1932), Byron Nelson (1944-45), Ben Hogan (1953) and Trevino in receiving the award. It is an honor never won by Jack Nicklaus or Arnold Palmer.

Woods finished with 231 points in the voting to easily outdistance the NFL's Detroit Lions running back Barry Sanders, who had 100 points, and boxer Evander Holyfield, third with 98 points.

Sanders joined Eric Dickerson and O.J. Simpson this year as the only NFL players to rush for more than 2,000 yards in a season.

Holyfield lost a piece of his ear, but retained the WBA heavyweight title in June when Mike Tyson was disqualified for biting him twice.

Rounding out the top-five vote getters were the NBA's Michael Jordan and the NFL's Brett Favre. Baseballer Ken Griffey Jr. was sixth, followed by auto racer Jeff Gordon, baseballer Roger Clemens and Mark McGwire and ice hockey star Mario Lemieux.

Woods likely won the award as



much for his persona as for his performance. His enthusiasm, flair for the dramatic, aggressive style of play and ethnic mix in an overwhelmingly white game made him an almost unbelievable marketing package.

And he was the equal of the hype. Woods won the opening tournament of the year in dramatic fashion when he nearly made a hole-in-one on the first playoff hole at the Mercedes Championships in January.

He then took the Asian Honda Classic the next month in Thailand, his mother Tida's home-

land, where his arrival received five TV coverage usually reserved for heads of state.

His victory at the Masters in April was by a record-shattering 12 strokes and took on added social significance that put golf on the front pages because Woods not only became the first non-white to win a major golf championship but also did it at Augusta National Golf Club, a virtual symbol of racial separation in the sport.

Woods' father is black and his mother is from Thailand. That Martina Hingis won The

AP's Female Athlete of the Year award shouldn't come as a surprise.

After all, she captured just about everything else in 1997.

"1997 was a dream come true for me," the 17-year-old tennis diva said from her home in Switzerland. "I still sometimes can't even believe it."

She won the Australian Open in January, then followed up with victories at Wimbledon and the US Open, three of the four tournaments that make up the Grand Slam. In the fourth one, the French Open in June, she suffered her first

loss of the year when she was upset in the final by Iva Majoli of Croatia.

The Paris defeat came after she underwent knee surgery after she fell from a horse for the second time in the year. An earlier fall in Australia didn't hamper her march to the year's first Grand Slam tournament crown.

Hingis was chosen with 92 first-place votes and a total of 363 points. Golfer Annika Sorenstam finished second with 20 first-place votes and 178 points.

Soccer player Mia Hamm was third with nine first-place votes

and 95 points, and basketball star Chamique Holdclaw received 8 first-place votes and 69 points. Basketball player Cynthia Cooper was fifth with 67 points.

Rounding out the top 10 were figure skater Tara Lipinski (66 points), track and field star Marion Jones (35), boxer Christy Martin (34), tennis player Venus Williams (25) and figure skater Michelle Kwan (22).

Trained to be a champion from birth, Hingis was named after tennis star Martina Navratilova. And in 1995, Hingis had the kind of year Navratilova had in 1983, winning the Australian, Wimbledon and the US Open, stumbling only in the fourth round at the French Open. Hingis finished this year with a 75-5 record, won 12 titles and earned \$3.4m exclusive of endorsements.

Vivacious and nearly always smiling, on and off the court, Hingis showed both a free spirit and a fiery tenacious will to win. When she wasn't riding horses, she would be rollerblading through a park alongside her mother and coach, Melanie Molitor, both of them unconcerned about potential injury. When Hingis hurt her knee before the French Open, she proudly spoke of going through the surgery, saying that now she could really say that she's an athlete.

No doubt Hingis benefited from the absence of injured Steffi Graf most of the year, and the inability of former No. 1 Monica Seles to regain her form and confidence after a series of injuries. But whenever that fortuitous absence of top competition was pointed out to her, Hingis confidently responded that she was on the rise and their time was passing anyway.

Indeed, Hingis became the underdog winner of the Australian, the youngest at Wimbledon in 110 years and the second-youngest winner of the US Open after Tracy Austin in 1979.

Hingis, who grew an inch and put on 15 pounds during the year to reach 5-foot-7 (170 cms), 130 pounds (59 kg), said her two most significant matches came in the French semifinals against Seles and the US Open final against Williams.

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## Former soccer great Finney knighted by Queen Elizabeth

LONDON (AP) — Former England winger Tom Finney is to be knighted and fiery Welsh striker Mark Hughes gets the MBE in the New Year's Honors List, announced yesterday by Queen Elizabeth II.

Often outspoken racehorse trainer Jenny Pitman, the only woman to have trained a Grand National winner, and Martin Johnson, the lock forward who led the British Lions to a series victory in South Africa in the summer, both will receive the OBE.

Tessa Sanderson, the 1984 Olympic javelin champion who appeared in her sixth games in Atlanta last year having first competed in Moscow in 1980, receives the more prestigious OBE to go with the MBE she received in 1985.

Jack Rowell, who stepped down as England's rugby union coach after leading the team to a Five Nations Championship Grand Slam, three Triple Crowns and a World Cup semifinal, gets the OBE while Scottish international goalkeeper Jim Leighton, set to play in next year's World Cup just short of his 40th birthday, receives the MBE.

Finney, now in his mid-70s, stayed loyal to his team, Preston North End, during an illustrious 13-year career which ended in 1959 after scoring 187 goals in 431 League games and 30 goals for England in 76 internationals.

Hughes, who made his name with Manchester United and also played in Spain for Barcelona, won four FA Cup winners medals, the latest with his current club, Chelsea, last season.

The OBE also goes to Squadron Leader Andy Green, who drove the Thrust supersonic car to a world land-speed record 763.035 mph (1,227.9 kph) or Mach 1.02 in Nevada's Black Rock Desert in October, .02 faster than the speed of sound.

Peter Goss, a racing sailor who turned back in heavy seas during a round-the-world yacht race to rescue fellow competitor Raphael Dinelli of France, also receives the OBE.

Although knighted for his music, Elton John is also owner of Watford soccer club of the second division.

**Weah under the knife**  
MILAN (Reuters) — Former world soccer player of the year George Weah had successful surgery in Milan yesterday for a herniated disc. The AC Milan striker is expected to be out of action for about two months after the operation for the injury between the fourth and fifth vertebrae of his back.